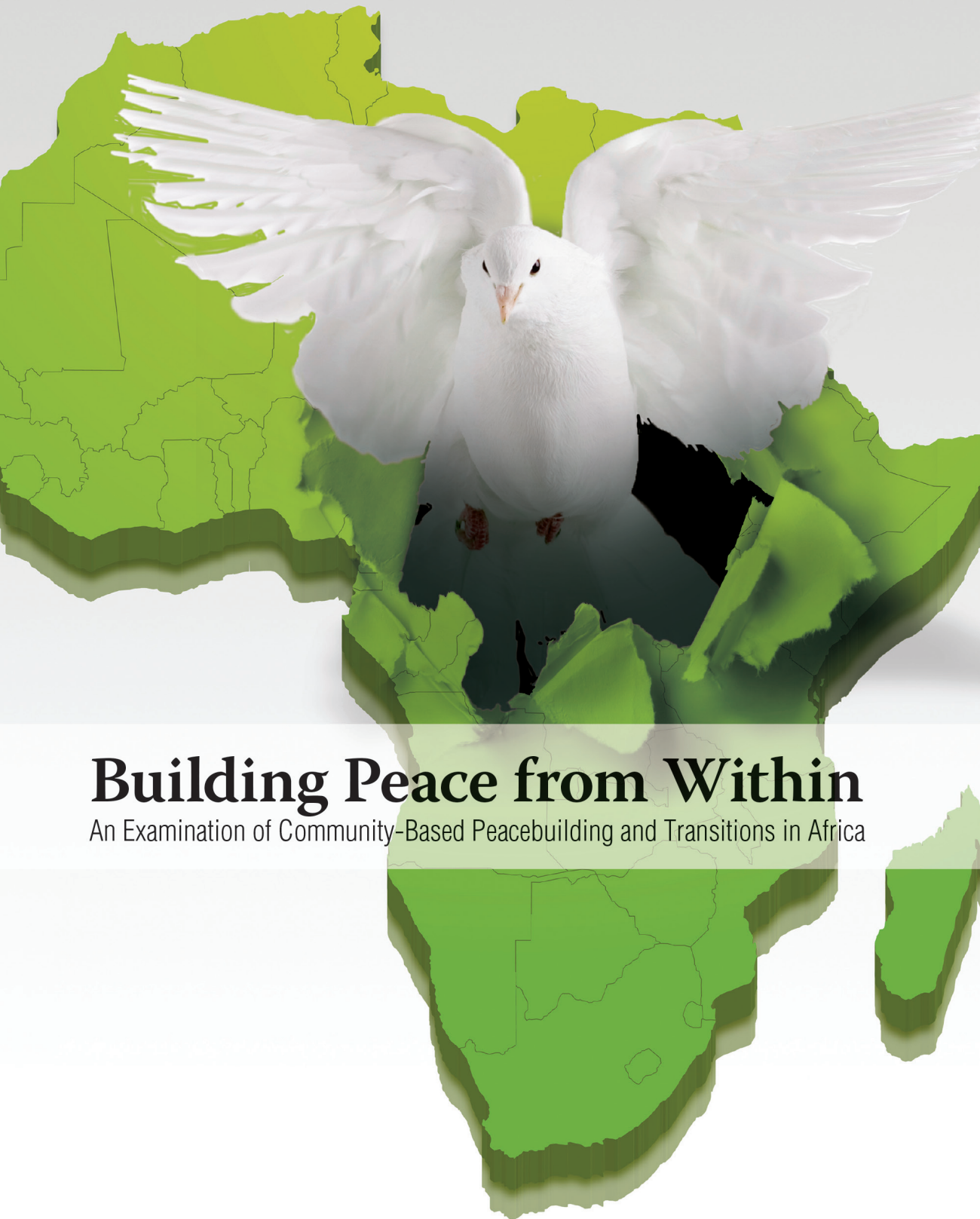




Building Peace from Within

An Examination of Community-Based Peacebuilding and Transitions in Africa

Edited by Sylvester Bongani Maphosa, Laura DeLuca and Alphonse Keasley

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Edited by:
Sylvester B. Maphosa
Laura DeLuca
and Alphonse Keasley

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Table of Contents

viii	Acknowledgements
x	Preface
xii	Editors biographies
xiii	Notes on contributors
1	Chapter 1 Building peace from within: an introduction <i>Sylvester B. Maphosa and Alphonse Keasley</i>
15	Chapter 2 Capacity-building for sustainable peacebuilding in Africa <i>Tony Karbo</i>
36	Chapter 3 Let us talk: African contributions to peacebuilding <i>John Paul Lederach and Angela Lederach</i>
53	Chapter 4 Healing and integrated development as part of peacebuilding in post-conflict areas: a social capital lens <i>Yvonne Shiep</i>
74	Chapter 5 Does restorative justice work? an evaluation of the restorative justice programmes of Phoenix Zululand <i>Geoff Harris</i>
85	Chapter 6 Reintegration of child soldiers: a case of southern Sudan <i>Pamela Machakanja</i>
109	Chapter 7 An African odyssey: from child soldiering to peacemaker <i>Morris Matadi, Alphonse Keasley, and Laura DeLuca</i>

119	Chapter 8 Addressing ethno-political conflicts through the concept of <i>Abanyarwanda</i> : a case of 'ethnic amnesia' in Rwanda? <i>Martha Mutisi</i>
137	Chapter 9 The politics of alternative justice in post-genocide Rwanda: assessing the <i>Gacaca</i> community justice system <i>Nicasius Achu Check</i>
153	Chapter 10 Conflict resolution, land disputes and peacebuilding in northern Tanzania: the role of customary institutions <i>Mara Goldman, Makko Sinandei and Laura DeLuca</i>
172	Chapter 11 The role of women in grassroots peacebuilding in Kenya <i>Karambu Ringera</i>
199	Chapter 12 Women's involvement in peace and security: the case of the SANDF <i>Ntsiki Memela-Motumi</i>
216	Chapter 13 Elections by contract: a covenant of peace in African communities <i>Ajume Wingo</i>
232	Chapter 14 Elections and community regeneration: implications for democracy and peacebuilding in the DRC <i>Sylvester Bongani Maphosa</i>
251	Chapter 15 Peacebuilding in South Africa: cross-cultural implications <i>Alphonse Keasley</i>
268	Chapter 16 Social media and civil society in the Tunisian Revolution: implications for democracy and peacebuilding <i>Stephen Juan King</i>

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The oft-quoted statement of African humanity, 'I am because we are', captures the spirit of this book. The contributions embody, as Sylvester states in the introduction, '... the concept of ubuntu value, which describes the sense of duty to care for those in need in a neighbourhood or community by building family and community trust and cohesion'. Without forethought or discussion, we – the editors– Sylvester, Laura and Alphonse, have actualised our personal ubuntu value system and have functioned, engaged and blossomed within this ethos to benefit the 'we' across Africa. We are indebted to many and joyously share with the world the gratitude that we feel for those who have buoyed us up along the journey of crafting this work.

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A special thanks to Lizzy Motaung for coordinating arrangements for the AISA flat and office space, Mamello Theledi for coordinating our many phone calls between Pretoria and Boulder, Laurette Mkhwebane, Charl van der Merwe, Ali Bibbo, Octavia Rorke, Yvette Francis and Vincent Mnisi, who helped organise the logistics and publicity for the round table colloquy and series of review meetings.

We also wish to thank experts who came together for the 9 to 12 January 2012 colloquy at AISA, who contributed not only by writing a chapter for the book, but also through knowledge-sharing, cross-cultural exchange and relationship-building as part of the roundtable seminar. These include Dr Siphamandla Zondi, Prof. Narnia Bohler-Muller, Ms Sandra Adong Order, Mr Rob Rose, Dr Sehlare Makgetlaneng and Ms Monica Moore. We are grateful for their collegiality.

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We also thank the Arcadia Hotel in Pretoria and the Rose Guest House in Brooklyn for hosting our guests for the peacebuilding conference. To the staff at the Hector Pieter-son Museum, thank you for the warm welcome, and to the staff at Freedom Park, thank you for the warm welcome for our last round table session. The visit was an inspiring space linked to peacebuilding in the South African context. One poignant moment was when we washed our hands and took a moment for reflection at the rocks representing South Africa and the international orb. Our discussions and collaboration indeed produced revelatory insights that have deepened our appreciation for humanity and for Africa.

Sylvester B. Maphosa, Laura DeLuca
and Alphonse Keasley.

Preface

Peace from Within is an account of grassroots peacemaking and peacebuilding successes in parts of Africa and of the processes of furthering grassroots cultures of peace in Africa and beyond. This book incorporates first-hand experiences with peacemaking and peacebuilding processes around Africa, inspirational testimonials about maturing into being a peacemaker and peacebuilder, recommendations for updating and modernising peacemaking and peacebuilding through gender mainstreaming and enhanced community decision-making, as well as recommendations for policymakers and academics.

The primary aim of *Peace from Within* is to motivate readers to discover their personal value in the active process of peacemaking and peacebuilding to eventually extend the value to community endeavours. Simultaneously, the goal is to make an impact on policymakers to invest in creating a culture of peacemaking and peacebuilding throughout Africa and beyond.

The idea to write a book came from a chance meeting and a mutual interest in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Africa. Sylvester Bongani Maphosa, PhD, chief research specialist and head of the peace and security unit at the Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA) and Laura DeLuca, PhD, an anthropology lecturer at the University of Colorado Boulder, first broached the subject of collaborating on a book in October 2010. Both had attended the conference sponsored by the Center for the Study of Conflict, Collaboration and Creative Governance that was organised by Dr Colleen Scanlan-Lyons and Dr Stan Deetz, faculty members at the University of Colorado Boulder.

Maphosa visited Boulder, CO USA for the Reinventing Governance Conference held at the Millennium Harvest House from 8 to 10 October 2010. Dr Maphosa and Dr DeLuca both participated in the session: *The ultimate governance challenge: Mitigating violence where states cannot*. Dr DeLuca was the session facilitator and Dr Maphosa was a discussion leader.

It was not until the conference was over that Dr Maphosa and Dr DeLuca met to discuss the idea of a book. Dr Scanlon-Lyons, the conference organiser, arranged a series of meetings for Dr Maphosa with various Africanist faculty members on the CU campus, including a meeting with Dr DeLuca. When Dr DeLuca learned that Dr Maphosa had not left the Millennium Hotel during the entire three-day governance conference, she suggested that they walk on the Boulder Creek path – a pedestrian path that closely follows its scenic namesake waterway for most of its journey. They walked on the winding Boulder Creek path that runs east from Boulder Canyon. Meeting in the open sunshine while walking created a different meeting environment from a typical office meeting and the creative brainstorming flowed.

Dr Maphosa and Dr DeLuca discussed the idea of collaborating on an AISA book on community-based peacebuilding in Africa. Dr Maphosa had reviewed Dr DeLuca's CV and noted her research experience on gender, forced migration and conflict resolu-

tion in Sudan. He also noted that the bottom-up peacebuilding book would focus on successes of local peacebuilding efforts and that the book would not only be for an academic audience but would largely be aimed at policy-makers and practitioners, so Dr DeLuca's outreach, relationship-building and grant-writing skills would be of interest. After some follow-up email discussions, the peacebuilding book project was launched and Dr DeLuca joined Dr Maphosa as a co-editor.

Conceptual framework and call for articles

Dr DeLuca was named research fellow with the AISA and paid a research visit to Pretoria in August 2011 to work with Dr Maphosa on creating a conceptual framework for the community-based peacebuilding book and to initiate a call for contributors. The idea behind the framework was to document successful peacebuilding practices with anthropological attention to ethnographic detail. Though we are constantly confronted with top-down failures, civil wars and violence in the African context, we hear less about indigenous peacemaking mechanisms

Keasley joins editorial staff and proposes the title 'Peace from Within'

After the 9 to 12 January 2012 conference hosted by AISA in Pretoria for an author's roundtable colloquy entitled, '*Peace from below: An examination of community-based peacebuilding and transitions in Africa*', Dr Alphonse Keasley came up with the concept 'Peace from Within' to highlight the strengths of indigenous African concepts and mechanisms such as '*ubuntu*'. Dr Maphosa agreed to incorporate it into the book. At this point, Dr Keasley played an active role in editing and shaping the peacebuilding book beyond his earlier role as chapter editor. Both Dr Maphosa and Dr DeLuca agreed that he should become a co-editor because of the quality and quantity of his contributions.

Sylvester Bongani Maphosa, Laura DeLuca
and Alphonse Keasley

Editors biographies

Sylvester Bongani Maphosa is Chief Research Specialist in Governance and Security at the Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA) and has a seat in the Research and Publications Committee (RPC). He holds a PhD in Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies (2009), an MA in Peace and Governance (2005), a BEd in Environmental Sciences (2002) and a Diploma in Education (1992) and has extensive field experience in research, government, higher education, non-government and community-based programming. His research interests include conflict prevention and conflict transformation, community-based peacebuilding, human security and development and the evaluation of peacebuilding models in violently divided societies. Dr Maphosa has published extensively.

Laura DeLuca is a lecturer in Global Studies and Anthropology at the University of Colorado-Boulder (CU-B). Before moving to Boulder she worked at the University of Vermont in Burlington Vermont and Princeton University in New Jersey. In East Africa, she taught with the United States Peace Corps. Her research and teaching focus on forced migration, African refugees, as well as conservation, globalisation and indigenous peoples. In 2011 she was appointed as research fellow with the Peace and Security Unit at the AISA. She also received a Fulbright Specialist Program grant to work with AISA training and outreach related to community-based peacebuilding.

Alphonse Keasley currently holds the position of Assistant Vice Chancellor at the University of Colorado-Boulder (CU-B). In addition, he teaches in the CU-B Honours Program as well as the CU-B Leadership Certificate Programme. He has directed numerous senior honours theses on topics such as Embodied Religion, Incrementalism and the US Supreme Court Justices and Privilege in Public Schools. Keasley has also directed masters theses in Sociology and doctoral dissertations in Theatre and Dance. Internationally, he has served as an executive board member of the Shakespeare Theatre Association (formerly Shakespeare Theatre Association of America). Finally, he conducts a CU-B Global Seminar in South Africa every year with CU-B students and is a Fulbright Specialist with the AISA.

Notes on contributors

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Geoff Harris is a professor in the Department of Public Management and Economics at Durban University of Technology in South Africa, with responsibility for the post-graduate Peacebuilding Programme. He previously held similar posts at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa (1999-2010) and the University of New England, Australia (1980-1999). An economist by training, he is currently researching the relationship between income inequality and violence in Sub-Saharan Africa and the costs of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

Tony Karbo is a senior programme officer and associate professor at the University for PEACE, Africa Programme, and the managing editor of the Africa Peace and Conflict Journal, a bi-annual peer-reviewed journal that examines peace, conflict, development, governance and other security-related issues on the African continent. He was a senior lecturer at the Institute of Peace, Leadership and Governance (IPLG) at the Africa University in Zimbabwe and also coordinated the institute's training programmes. He is an associate director and trainer for the South-North Centre for Peacebuilding and Development. Dr Karbo has also served as the Southern and Eastern African representative for the Institute of Multi-track Diplomacy. He holds a PhD in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University, Virginia, USA.

Stephen J. King is an associate professor in the Government Department at Georgetown University in Washington, DC. He is an expert on North Africa and the Middle East. He is the author of *Liberalization against democracy: The local politics of economic reform in Tunisia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003) and *The new authoritarianism in the Middle East and North Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009). His current work focusses on community-based transitions in Egypt and Tunisia with emphasis on the role of social media.

Angela Jill Lederach is co-author of *When blood and bones cry out: Journeys through the soundscape of healing and reconciliation* (University of Queensland Press, 2010). She has worked in the Philippines, West Africa and Latin America. She has also been a research associate with the Center for Public Policy Studies in Boulder, Colorado (USA).

John Paul Lederach is a professor of International Peacebuilding at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame. Widely known for his pioneering work on conflict transformation, Dr Lederach is involved in conciliation work in Colombia, the Philippines, and Nepal, as well as countries in East and West Africa. He has helped design and conduct training programmes in 25 countries across five continents. He is the author of *When blood and bones cry out: Journeys through the soundscape of healing and reconciliation* (University of Queensland Press, 2010), *The moral imagination: The art and soul of building peace* (Oxford University Press, 2005), *The journey toward reconciliation* (Herald Press, 1999), *Building peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies* (USIP, 1997), and *Preparing for Peace: Conflict transformation across cultures* (Syracuse University Press, 1995). Dr Lederach holds a PhD in Sociology from the University of Colorado (1988).

Pamela Machakanja is a senior lecturer and director of the IPLG at the Africa University in Zimbabwe. Dr Machakanja conducts research in the integrated areas of the struggles for memory in post-conflict states, transitional justice and the gendered dynamics of peace, violence, leadership and governance issues. She is a member of a number of boards, including the Africa University Board of Directors, and has published extensively. She holds a PhD in Peace and Conflict Studies from the University of Bradford in the United Kingdom.

Morris Matadi is a former child soldier who works on restoration of peace and security in West Africa through the Initiative for the Development of Former Child Soldiers. On 3 June 1990 his life was changed forever when his family was killed while fleeing civil war. After his family had been killed and he had been left alone without food or security, he was eventually recruited to be a child soldier and later became an activist working on behalf of former child soldiers. In 2007 he participated in the Child Soldier Peace Initiative Study at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping School in Ghana.

In 2009 Matadi was featured in the Liberia Social Entrepreneurs Magazine as one of the year's finest social entrepreneurs. In 2011 he was awarded the African International Achiever Award for promoting community peace and was named a fellow of the Unreasonable Institute in Boulder, Colorado, USA.

Ntsiki Memela-Motumi was recruited into the underground structures of the military wing of the African National Congress in 1979 and worked as a courier between South Africa and Swaziland. She was subsequently forced to leave the country to go into exile and integrated into the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) in 1994. She has served in various capacities within the military milieu and is currently the Deputy Chief of Human Resources. Her areas of research interest have been HIV in the SANDF, gender-based violence and the impact of transformation in the military, including the value added in deploying female soldiers in peacekeeping missions. She is the author of the book, *Spear of hope – Affirmative action, transformation and reconciliation in the new SANDF*, and has also published various articles in journals and magazines.

Martha Mutisi holds a PhD from the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (S-CAR) at George Mason University, USA. Currently, Dr Mutisi is the manager of the Interventions Department at the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes in Durban. Previously, Dr Mutisi worked as a lecturer and staff development fellow at the IPLG and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Africa University in Zimbabwe. Her areas of research interest include gender and development, gender and peace processes, peace agreements, governance, democratisation and transitional justice – in which she has published extensively.

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Makko Sinandei is a professional trainer on community development and environmental planning. He has over 10 years' experience of being a community development facilitator in rural development in Tanzania. He received training locally, regionally and abroad. This culminated in, among others, key skills and capacities in project design and development, public awareness, community motivation in development, integrated environmental and land use planning, local conflict resolution and peacebuilding, customary leadership and capacity-building for empowerment and community-based natural resource planning and management.

Yvonne Sliep works in Applied Human Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. She is an experienced researcher and teacher who has published extensively and is internationally renowned for her experience in collective healing practices in war-traumatised countries using narrative theatre. For the past 20 years she has specialised in critical community psychology and is the director of the Narrative Foundation. In the Great Lakes area she is known by the name '*Inamahoro*', meaning 'Mother of Peace'. It is an identity that has become part of her lifelong work.

Ajume Wingo is an associate professor of Philosophy and the director of the Center for Values and Social Policy at the University of Colorado-Boulder (CU-B) and Associate of the Du Bois Institute at Harvard University. He is an expert on political symbols, rituals, democracy and African elections. He was born in Nso in the North-west Province of Cameroon. He attended Cameroon College of Arts, Science and Technology in Bambili, where he studied History, Economics and Geography. He also attended the University of Yaoundé, Cameroon where he studied law at the Faculty of Law and Economics. He received his BA from the University of California, Berkeley and his MA and PhD from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Building peace from within: an introduction

Sylvester B. Maphosa and Alphonse Keasley

Introduction

In our everyday lives, we live in accord with others around us. We drive hurriedly but cooperatively along highways. We walk through crowded marketplaces in a frenetic yet orderly manner. Daily, we sit and stand on public transportation vehicles while accommodating others. Cooperatively, orderly and accommodately, we organise. We humans function in our society with a fundamental sense to be considerate, agreeable, and overall, respectful. These qualities serve us to establish the biological state of homeostasis, the psychological condition of centredness and balance and the cultural reality of harmony. In all, we strive for a sense of *peace from within*.

As a guiding principle the notion of building *peace from within* draws from the idea of community-based regeneration, which describes voluntary and peaceful activities of grassroots actors that reflect their broader interests of building peaceful communities and existence.¹ The enterprise and actions stem from the concern of motivated individuals in the community who work together in direct response to the human security needs of the community.² The phenomena are embedded in the concept of *ubuntu* value, which describes the sense of duty to care for those in need in a neighbourhood or community, build family and community trust and cohesion.³ Such peaceful regeneration efforts mobilise around local stewardship and resources including the material, financial, and human contribution to generate and sustain coping mechanisms in the face of insecurity. Generically, these efforts are focused on grassroots and community relationships, building broken linkages and *ubuntu* values. Because community-based peacebuilding is entrenched in the communities they serve, local actors are well positioned as vehicles for long-term conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

Building *peace from within* thus functions on several horizontal and vertical interrelated levels in an iterative process. It highlights the concept that peace begins with each individual. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, we ‘must be the change [we] wish to see in the world’ because ‘peace begins with you [us]’. In order to begin working for peace, seeking those elements that bring peace to our very being allows authentic engagement with peacemaking and peacebuilding. Peacekeeping and peacemaking are collective terms that cover a range of peacebuilding interventions aimed at transforming (diplomacy and mediated peace processes) and preventing (deployment of military forces for peacekeeping) conflicts. Notionally, the range of actions in peacebuilding

denote processes of learning as individuals and all together practise the ways of peace, cooperation, compassion, forgiveness and understanding. Though the skills of peacemaking and peacebuilding may not be part of everyone's formal or informal education, most humans find the means for sustaining peace within their daily lives. It is this intuitive sense of *peace from within* that is called upon for peacemaking and peacebuilding in local communities as a regular course of life.

On the African continent, examples abound demonstrating the growth of peacemaking individuals who have come together with the purpose of peacemaking and peacebuilding in their communities. The relationship between individual peacemakers and peacebuilding and community peacemaking and peacebuilding is essential for engaging this book's foundational principles: that is, the active and ongoing process of peace is a result of individuals in local grassroots communities participating cooperatively with one another for their common good and the good of younger community members. Additionally, the role of grassroots peacemaking and peacebuilding has a long tradition in Africa and still operates in numerous communities. As will be noted throughout many of the chapters, terms (for example, *ergada*, *gacaca*, *ubuntu*, *guurti*) that have long been used within the countries, provide evidence of building *peace from within* to the family, community and larger society. Such information counters the assumption that Africa is overrun with a preponderance of conflict and war-torn areas. Comparatively, traditional African peacemaking and peacebuilding dwarf the high-profile areas of conflict and war.

This book therefore seeks to examine how successful models of building '*peace from within*' on the African context function. It draws emerging lessons to provide critical recommendations on policy, practice and academia – our primary audience. While there are numerous examples of failures of conflict resolution in Africa, shown by complex axes of intractable conflict, less attention has been paid to successes. While acknowledging the challenges that exist, this edited volume provides positive examples of building *peace from within* in fragile contexts through many forms of initiatives and actions at different levels: community-based (through individual and/or collective local peace initiatives), government (through ministries and/or departments), and regional (through external and/or multilateral infrastructure for peace).

Building peace and ending contemporary conflicts are not easy tasks. Modern conflicts have become more complex with the predominance of protracted and intractable intrastate emergencies. Moreover, in striving to maintain peaceful communities, it has become important to encourage people in affected communities to consider the effects of social violence, so that they can better understand their own responses and those of others to initiate the desired social changes. These effects may include elusive peace dividends from peace agreements, social injustice, destructive behaviour and loss of business opportunities and social values, poor livelihoods or quality of life (for example, measured along mortality rates, literacy, access to potable water, health and education, employment opportunities), alcohol and drug misuse, unending gender-based and sexual violence, limited capacity for conflict resolution and the continuing suffering

of community members due to psychological consequences of traumatic experiences. Intervention in such complex emergencies calls for increasingly multidimensional actors and actions that address the individual as the primary referent of security within and across state borders.

The question of security has long been an integral feature of the broader global peacebuilding and integration agenda. Traditionally, security was narrowly defined as the protection of territorial integrity, stability, and vital interests of states through the use of political, legal, or coercive instruments at the state or international level. According to Barry Buzan, this perception subsequently reduced the complex notion to a mere derivative and synonym for power.⁴ In the 1990s, the concept broadened to provide a suitable framework for proposing multi-dimensional and integrated solutions for complex social problems in development and respect for human rights. While there is no single definition of the term, the consensus on the new discourse asserts a broader and holistic framework of security, which incorporates a shift of focus from state-centred to people-centred approaches.

Peace from within: why now?

Over the last two decades, the field of conflict resolution and peacebuilding has rapidly proliferated. Many books and articles on conflict prevention and peacebuilding are published each year. This demonstrates an enormous interest in finding peaceful means to mitigate violent conflict. This interest is not coincidental. The watershed moment 22 years ago that witnessed the end of the cold war also ushered in new conflicts and complex humanitarian emergencies. The fundamental change was a shift from interstate wars to the proliferation of deep-rooted and intractable intrastate conflicts; the stakes for human security escalated.

Tragically, Africa is home to over half of the civil wars in the world. More than two-thirds of countries are trapped in epicentres of significant conflict axes characterised to some degree by ethno-political conflict. Forms of social turmoil commonly generate around: (i) identity groups that feel their basic needs for equality, security and political participation are not respected; (ii) access to state-related power, often in the form of asymmetric conflict between government and insurgent group(s); (iii) issues not easily understood without various types of international linkages affecting the course of events; and (iv) frequently encountered deeply rooted antagonistic histories.⁵ Increased fragile conditions in many countries cause the militarisation of social life, politics and economy. A few examples of significant flashpoints are the Horn of Africa (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania); the Great Lakes region (Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo [DRC], Central African Republic, Rwanda, Uganda); Sudan (Sudan, Darfur, South Sudan); North Africa (Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Western Sahara) and Madagascar, Nigeria, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. Violent cycles of aggression and human rights abuses, hostility and fear entrap and traumatise

many individuals and communities. This situation causes direct threats to human security and generates major drawbacks to progress towards the attainment of peace, good governance and millennium development goals and better livelihoods.⁶

To respond to this emergent corollary in approach, understanding and nature of modern conflicts, Boutros-Ghali's 1992 *Agenda for peace* and 1995 *Supplement to an agenda for peace*, including the 2000 *Brahimi report*, emerged as strategic seminal documents of our time. While they do not claim to be comprehensive solutions to contemporary conflicts, they should be taken as a starting point in any discussion and process towards the management and resolution of modern and intractable conflicts by engaging diverse actors at different levels to address different issues and root causes of peacelessness. The documents underscore pragmatic solutions to matters related to existing conflicts and their contextual factors. They provide a conceptual framework for reflecting on peace and security in the post-cold-war context.

Furthermore, they provide a foundation for systematic processes of reform across all levels of peacebuilding agencies (such as state, multilateral, local, and non-state actors). Drawing largely from the work of the 1970s by Johan Galtung, the United Nations (UN) former Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, postulated a coordinated strategy including preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping (or enforcement) and post-conflict peacebuilding as part of efforts to consolidate broader ideas of peace and security. Boutros-Ghali described this plan for peace as 'action[s] to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict.'⁷ Preventive diplomacy therefore seeks to resolve disputes before violence breaks out; peacemaking and peacekeeping are required to halt conflicts and preserve peace once it is attained. Boutros-Ghali asserts that peacemaking and peacekeeping, if successful, strengthen opportunities for post-conflict peacebuilding, which can prevent the recurrence of societal violence.⁸

Three years later in 1995, Boutros-Ghali emphasised that comprehensive and multidimensional approaches [for UN peace missions] might include:

The supervision of ceasefires, the regroupment and demobilisation of forces, their reintegration into civilian life and the destruction of their weapons; the design and implementation of de-mining programmes; the return of refugees and displaced persons; the provision of humanitarian assistance; the supervision of existing administrative structures; the establishment of new police forces; the verification of respect for human rights; the design and supervision of constitutional, judicial and electoral reforms; the observation, supervision and even organization and conduct of elections; and the coordination of support for economic rehabilitation and reconstruction.⁹

This understanding helps broadly to: (i) denote the means for assessing the root causes of fragile states; (ii) propose adequate policies for resolving social violence; and (iii) provide the means for building sustainable peace and development. Therefore, building

peace from within deals with the individual and community capacities to identify threats and avoid them when possible, and to mitigate their effects when they do occur. It also means helping communities to appreciate the value of conflict and so begin to move away from violent conflict and negative peace to more positive and non-violent attitudes and behaviours. In addition, it means helping affected groups and individuals cope with the consequences of the widespread insecurity resulting from derailed processes of democratisation, human rights violations and massive poverty and under-development. Interestingly, this approach introduces the notion of cross-sectoral heterogeneous security complexes, as well as addressing the social aspects of security and how people or societies construct and/or securitise threats from the individual and society to the state and sub-region.

Thus, more than ever, since the emergence of modern conflicts and containment strategies of the cold war, the pursuit of post-conflict peacebuilding necessitated increasingly multidimensional and multifunctional enterprising with requisite abilities to interact with a complex mix of actors that can provide more than just the absence of direct violence. The Brahimi report asserts that it is the job of peacekeepers to ‘work to maintain a secure local environment while peacebuilders work to make that environment self-sustaining ... making peacekeepers and peacebuilders inseparable partners.’¹⁰

In spite of these tenuous attempts, moving the African continent toward ‘just peace’ and building a ‘culture of peace’¹¹ have been laden with problems. There is a growing realisation that standard political operational procedures are insufficient and that rebuilding fragile and/or war-torn society call for entirely new approaches to the theory and practice of recovery. Consideration must be given to ways of resolving rather than just managing conflict, focusing on and seeking to address the root causes of violence. Boutros-Ghali asserts that this ‘requires integrated action and delicate dealings between [third party actors] and the parties to the conflict.’¹² However, a dilemma often emerges in that parties to the conflict are frequently a complex mix of state and non-state actors, which is a great challenge for many third-party actors to handle, especially when key actors have no interest in a return to peace. Examples of stubborn flashpoints include the Horn (such as in Somalia), West Africa (such as the Casamance conflict), the Great Lakes region (such as the DRC), and Southern Africa (Zimbabwe basket-case). Regularly, spoilers opposed to peace agreements derail moves towards stability and security.

Furthermore, this challenge underscores the critical acknowledgement that building human security and strengthening a culture of peace in contemporary societies involves far more than structural and state rebuilding. Fundamentally, broader conceptualisation is needed to support the difficult long-term process of peaceful regeneration of individuals and social relationships at all levels and to restore the people’s trust and confidence, including rebuilding *ubuntu* value to provide the population with greater hope for the future. Such actions that can transform and bring about social change root the peacebuilding

abilities within individuals as in ‘peace beginning with you [us]’ and then building ripples of peaceful relationships across families, communities, regions and countries.

What then does it tangibly mean to build peaceful communities? Implicit in the foregoing discussion are notions of negative vs. positive peace. Peacebuilding is thus a local and societal long-term process incorporating goals of both negative and positive peace. Johan Galtung distinguished between negative peace (absence of war) as the outcome of efforts to stop physical or personal violence (direct violence), and positive peace (society without physical or structural violence) as the goal of efforts to end indirect structural and cultural violence (indirect violence) that threatens the economic, social and cultural well-being and identity of individual human beings and groups.¹³

An emerging common understanding is that the path to sustained peace leads through conflict transformation and social change;¹⁴ and, finally, a set of building blocks needs to be in place when positive peace is achieved.¹⁵ According to Spence, this process calls for new attitudes and practices: ones that are flexible, consultative and collaborative and that operate from a contextual understanding of the root causes of conflict.¹⁶ The process is therefore transformative. It is based on eradicating something that is undesired (violence) and the building of something that is desired through the transformation of relationships and construction of the conditions for peace.¹⁷ This book hence builds on the notion that creating *peace from within* and consolidating human security in fragile societies requires more than just a political framework for regeneration. It highlights narratives of fundamental changes in emotion, attitude and behaviour based on mutual acceptance of past violence and hurt within and between former enemy groups regarding themselves and the other to rebuild social relationships, restore people’s confidence in governance systems and provide hope for the future.

Goodhand and Hulme assert that building peaceful communities increasingly mean any activities broadly undertaken with the purpose of preventing, alleviating or resolving violent or potentially violent conflict.¹⁸ It is the strategy which most directly tries to reverse the destructive processes that accompany violence. Affirming this view, Paffenholz avers that peacebuilding is a long-term process that covers all activities intended to build and promote peace and overcome violence.¹⁹ Furthermore, Paffenholz asserts that the overall aim of peacebuilding is to prevent violent outbreaks of conflicts or to effect sustainable transformation of violent conflicts into peaceful actions.²⁰ Reyhler maintains that these actions refer to ‘all the efforts required on the way to the creation of a sustainable peace zone: imagining a peaceful future, conducting an overall needs assessment, developing a coherent plan, and designing an effective implementation of the plan.’²¹

To address the root cause of conflicts, Henning Haugerudbraaten delineates enduring peacebuilding processes from institutionalised appropriation models of intervention.²² Thus, Henning postulates a six-facet and two-concept model of the peacebuilding process. The six elements are the aims, means, temporal aspects, actors, processes or actions, and organisation of peacebuilding. The two dimensions around

which the six elements pivot are the short-term involvement of the international community and long-term efforts by indigenous actors. The former are characterised by centralism and political measures whose actions are primarily undertaken by external agents, while the latter demands actions in political, economic, humanitarian and social spheres in broad and comprehensive efforts that are carried out by diverse actors. Significant in the approach is the increasing role of local civil society – in particular, grassroots and community-based agencies – in engendering processes enabling building *peace from within* in fragile contexts. Table 1.1 summarises the link between the six dimensions and two concepts of peacebuilding.

Tendency 1	Dimension of peacebuilding	Tendency 2
Promote good governance and dispute settlement mechanisms	Aim	Address root causes of conflict
Primarily political intervention	Means	Broad intervention in political, economic, security and humanitarian spheres
Short-term	Temporal aspect	Long-term
International community	Main Actors	Indigenous community
Peacebuilding equated to the actions undertaken	Process/action dimension	Peacebuilding seen as the result, as the aggregate process
Peacebuilding centralised under the auspices of the UN, more stress on co-ordination than on diversity	Organisation	Peacebuilding facilitated by a multitude of actors, more stress on diversity than on coordination

Table 1.1: Six dimensions and two concepts of peacebuilding

Source: Adapted from Haugerudbraaten (1998, p.7)

Organisation of the volume

The preceding discussion should help to create an understanding of the critical dimensions the narratives can shape in outlining case processes in building peace from within (for instance, in terms of the aims, means, temporal aspects, protagonists, action and organisation of the undertaking). In terms of structure, the following chapter narratives and case studies highlight the significance of locally led and multi-dimensional strategies that can link processes and actors across explicit vertical and horizontal power differentials of social change at all levels of society and in all stages of conflict. The chapters demonstrate emerging evidence of positive impact and discernible social change. Furthermore, they illustrate how initiatives that engage and

foster local and national ownership and root peacebuilding abilities within individuals and/or communities have great potential to complement conventional tools and create enduring ripples of peaceful communities across regions and countries. However, throughout the volume great caution is exercised not to romanticise community-based peacebuilding.

Chapter 1

Building peace from within: an introduction by Sylvester Bongani Maphosa

This chapter highlights: i) how this book is framed 20 years after Boutros-Ghali's 1992 *An agenda for peace*, his 1995 *Supplement to An agenda for peace* and the Brahimi's 2000 *Multidimensional non-state actors' role in peacemaking*; ii) the rationale for focusing on grassroots practices emanating from within individuals (i.e., Gandhi's oft-quoted 'Peace begins with you'), their communities, and the African continent; and, iii) the goal of promoting more local actors to engage in transformative positive conflict and sustainable development. Although Boutros-Ghali and Brahimi's language seems very much about state actors and not local actors and civil society, the changing nature of modern conflicts and notion of 'all actions' and 'multi-dimensionality' reflect the whole of society approach, which is very much about integrated strategies and the invaluable roles of community-based actors and peacebuilding.

Chapter 2

Capacity-building for sustainable peacebuilding in Africa by Tony Karbo

This chapter explores the rationale behind capacity-building as a viable peacebuilding tool, the key approaches to capacity-building, challenges, and considerations in designing and implementing capacity-building along with levels of peacebuilding interventions and the role of training and research in building sustainable peace. The chapter concludes with recommendations on how to design capacity-building programmes that are user-friendly.

Chapter 3

Let us talk: African contributions to peacebuilding by John Paul Lederach and Angela Lederach

This chapter provides an overview of the field of peacebuilding with specific focus on community-based peacebuilding efforts in Africa. It begins by providing a review of both the conceptual and practical evolution of this relatively new field, drawing on case studies from Somalia and Liberia. While the academic study of peacebuilding has emerged only in the past few decades, the practice of community-based response to conflict is an ancient one. Seeking to restore relationships and cultivate peace in the midst and aftermath of violent conflict, peacebuilding offers an overarching concept that can encompass conflict transformation, truth-telling, reconciliation, trauma healing, economic development, environmental justice, gender justice and restorative

justice. Drawing on three distinct case studies, this chapter highlights the significant contributions community-based peacebuilding in Africa have made to the wider field.

Chapter 4

Healing and integrated development as part of peacebuilding in post-conflict areas: a social capital lens by Yvonne Sliep

This chapter draws on social capital as a theoretical lens to approach peacebuilding. It demonstrates how collective healing and integrated development form part of peacebuilding at community level. Narrative theatre is used as an entry point to bring people together in a safe environment around shared problems. The chapter emphasises the importance of addressing social change to protect the most vulnerable in fragile communities in a post-conflict context.

Chapter 5

Does restorative justice work? an evaluation of the restorative justice programmes of Phoenix Zululand by Geoff Harris

This chapter provides a case study of a bottom-up restorative justice intervention aimed at encouraging prisoners to take responsibility for their behaviour and at transforming relationships between prisoners and their families. From focus groups and interviews with ex-prisoners and their families, the study found that forgiveness and reconciliation were frequently achieved, a finding which has important implications for the extremely high levels of recidivism in South Africa.

Chapter 6

Reintegration of child soldiers: a case of Southern Sudan by Pamela Machakanja

The phenomenon of child soldiers has become a global concern to all because of the devastating effects it has on affected children, families robbed of their children and societies that lose the next generation of future leaders. While efforts have been made to address the child soldier phenomenon, universal approaches have neither deterred the forceful recruitment of children nor provided fool-proof reintegration of child soldiers into communities and helped them to lead meaningful lives. Using the example of the newly created nation-state of South Sudan, this chapter argues that in addition to the efforts already being made, there is a need for more comprehensive community-based approaches

Chapter 7

An African odyssey: from child soldiering to peacemaker by Morris Matadi, Alphonse Keasley and Laura DeLuca

This chapter chronicles the journey of Morris Matadi, a former child soldier-turned-peacemaker. In this quest, Matadi traverses an unpredictable landscape in the non-

linear process of becoming a peacemaker. His story begins as a vulnerable child bereft of parents caught in the maelstrom of Liberia's civil war. In search of sustenance and stability, Matadi is drawn to a general who plays the role of surrogate parent in the life of an impressionable youth. For nearly a decade, Matadi participated in the life of a child soldier. This chapter is based on interviews that Dr Alphonse Keasley and Dr Laura DeLuca conducted with Morris Matadi; it integrates a first-person narrative style with analysis and illustrates the idea of 'peace from within'.

Chapter 8

Addressing ethno-political conflicts through the concept of *Abanyarwanda*: a case of 'ethnic amnesia' in Rwanda by Martha Mutisi

The *Abanyarwanda* concept is discussed in the framework of post-structural theory, especially the idea of poly-vocality or the importance of different voices. The analysis also includes an examination of *abunzi* mediation committees as examples of initiatives to address the challenges in post-genocide Rwanda. The author offers insights into how to address the aftermath of ethno-political conflicts from a peacebuilding perspective.

Chapter 9

The politics of alternative justice in post-genocide Rwanda: assessing the *Gacaca* community justice system by Nicasius Achu Check

This chapter examines the *Gacaca* community justice system and questions whether the right justice architecture was devised for a deeply divided society such as Rwanda. It explores whether these processes are informed by local realities or by elites who are intent on exacting reparation from the vanquished sector of their society.

Chapter 10

Conflict resolution, land disputes and peacebuilding in Northern Tanzania: the role of customary institutions by Mara Goldman and Makko Sinandei

This chapter discusses the important role of customary institutions in peacebuilding in Northern Tanzania, with the focus on Maasai pastoral/agro-pastoral communities. The chapter describes an innovative project, the Community Leadership Forum, coordinated through a partnership of local and national non-governmental organisations to support customary leadership for improved community development, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. This project draws from the strength that customary leaders and customary institutions have in many communities, while also working to enhance such institutions to be more informed of national issues and to be gender-equitable. The project also builds strong partnerships with Tanzanian governance structures, to further legitimise the actions of customary leaders and to build lasting and sustained peace. This chapter thus provides valuable insight into the ways in which customary institutions can bring about peace from within communities, something that often goes

unrecognised. These findings are important for other areas throughout Africa, and in particular for pastoral areas faced with ongoing conflicts related to land pressures, land grabs and unfriendly government policies.

Chapter 11

The role of women in grassroots peacebuilding in Kenya by Karambu Ringera

This chapter addresses the role of women in peacebuilding, with emphasis on the post-election violence that erupted in Kenya in 2008. The author provides a review of the literature on women and peacebuilding in Africa, with particular attention to Kenya. We learn that women were not well represented in the official 2008 post-election mediation run by Kofi Annan. The author offers insights into how gender considerations can be more effectively incorporated into peacebuilding efforts. The author also discusses the implications these initiatives have for engendering future peacebuilding efforts in Kenya.

Chapter 12

Women's involvement in peace and security: SANDF by Ntsiki Memela-Motumi

The Brahimi report calls for multidimensional approaches to peacekeeping operations, including mainstreaming gender. This chapter focuses on the gender mainstreaming changes occurring in the South African Defence Force for peacekeeping missions. It illustrates best practice on how women's participation in the struggle for an equal, non-racist and non-sexist society has earned them the right to participate in all spheres of society, including combat roles.

Chapter 13

Elections by contract: a covenant of peace in African communities by Ajume Wingo

This chapter is one attempt at perpetual peace in African states through electoral democracy as an instrument. The path taken by this chapter is that of looking for the problems with the democratic electoral systems where they are; they are in the democratic electoral systems themselves, not in African people. Our de facto democratic electoral system creates too many negative opportunities for pervasion and few positive opportunities for legitimacy. The solution is that of reorienting the electoral system so it can procure perpetual peace and legitimacy and act as a source of individual flourishing. The good news is that electoral democracy is the rule all over the continent and no longer an exception. The problem is one of perversion of the system.

Chapter 14

Elections and community regeneration: implications for democracy and peacebuilding in the DRC by Sylvester Bongani Maphosa

The predisposition to underscore no more than a set of electoralist, institutionalist and proceduralist criteria in fragile and post-conflict countries as the embrace of human security is a fallacy in the quest for peaceful communities. Although some progress has been made in relation to democratisation, many gaps still need to be filled with regard to achieving enduring change and peace in the DRC. Elections alone do not make democracy and sustain a culture of peace and development. Indeed, many countries on the continent have gone through the motions of plebiscites, yet their democratic dividend and prospects for peace and development continue to elude millions, subjecting many to protracted socioeconomic deprivation and authoritarian governance. In this chapter the author examines how we can connect elections with socio-economic conditions in the DRC, as well as the missing link between elections, human security and development. The emerging realisation is that rebuilding the DRC calls for multidimensional, multi-sectoral, multi-levelled and multi-staged process approaches to recovery that emphasise simultaneously complementing dimensions such as reconciliation and psychosocial healing to sustain long-term (i.e., peacebuilding) cooperation between groups and eradicate the root causes of conflict.

Chapter 15

Peacebuilding in South Africa: cross-cultural implications by Alphonse Keasley

This chapter recounts the transformative learning experiences of American students learning about reconciliation and peacemaking processes. It emphasises the humanisation and rehumanisation tools related to building peaceful communities.

Chapter 16

Social media and civil society in the Tunisian revolution: implications for democracy and peacebuilding by Stephen Juan King

This chapter examines the role that Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, TUNeZine and other social media played in the Tunisian revolution. It argues that civil-society-building – in the Tunisian case transferred from the cyber public sphere to the traditional public sphere – plays an important role in post-conflict peacebuilding and the chances for lasting democracy. From a community-based peacebuilding perspective, it is particularly important to understand how social media can bring about change. This chapter also explains how social media help to mobilise individuals, families and communities. It shows how cyber communities can make democratisation more accessible as a grassroots effort. Since peacebuilding relates to democratisation, it is also important for those in the peacebuilding field to learn more about the cyber public sphere's role in the Tunisian revolution.

Chapter 17

Conclusion – peace from within by the Editors

Notes and references

- 1 Pugh defines peaceful regeneration as a process of social, political and economic adjustment to, and underpinning of, conditions of relative peace in which the participants, not least those who have been disempowered and impoverished by violence, can begin to prioritise future goals beyond their immediate survival (2002, p.2). See Pugh, M. (ed.), 2002. *Regeneration of war-torn societies. Global Issues Series*. London: Macmillan Press.
- 2 Cited in Lentfer, J., 2010. *What's missing from the DIY aid debate? Overlooking the capacity of local NGOs*. <http://www.how-matters.org/2010/11/08/missing-from-diy-aid-debate/> [Accessed 6 February 2013].
- 3 Maphosa asserts that *ubuntu* is a common word in the Bantu linguistic groups of the southern and eastern regions of Africa. It refers to the synthesis of all values that make a human being different from all other creatures ... attributes of *ubuntu* include love, respect, trust, reciprocity, peacefulness, justice, reconciliation, forgiveness, neighbourliness, humility, truth, caring, and God's vision of a shared purpose for mankind (2009, p. 58). See Maphosa, S.B., 2009. Building peace from below: the Centre *Ubuntu* in Burundi. *Africa Peace and Conflict Journal* 2(2), (2009) pp. 59-71.
- 4 Buzan, B., 1991. *People, states and power: An agenda for international security studies in the post-cold war era* (2nd edition). Hemel Hempstead: Harvester, p. 4-7.
- 5 This term, 'ethno-political conflict', was first coined by Edward Azar in the late 1970s and is now widely used to denote protracted social conflicts. See Austin, A., Fischer M. & Ropers, N. (Eds), 2004. *Transforming ethno-political conflict*. The Berghoff Handbook. Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management.
- 6 See Maphosa, S.B., 2012. *Democratic progress and regress: How can elections in Africa nurture human security and better livelihoods*, AISA No.73. <http://www.ai.org.za/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/04/No.-73.-Democratic-Progress-and-Regress.-How-can-Elections-in-Africa-Nurture-Human-Security-and-Better-Livelihoods.pdf> [Accessed 13 February 2013].
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- 8 Ibid.
- 9 *Supplement to An agenda for peace*, UN document, 1995, p. 6. www.un.org/docs/SG/space.html [Accessed 23 January 2013].
- 10 The Brahimi Report, 2000, p.2.
- 11 Galtung describes a 'culture of peace' as a negation of 'cultural violence' and denotes all aspects of a culture that serve to justify and legitimise direct peace and structural peace. It also connotes positive peace.
- 12 Boutros-Ghali, 1995, p.10.

- 13 Galtung, J., 1996. *Peace by peaceful means: Peace and conflict, development and civilization*. Oslo: International Peace Research Institute, PRIO, pp. 1-3.
- 14 See Lederach, J.P., 1997. *Building peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*. Washington: USIP.
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Capacity-building for sustainable peace-building in Africa

Tony Karbo

Introduction

Since the beginning of the 1990s, African educational institutions, particularly institutions of higher learning, have witnessed a sizeable increase in numbers, and both old and new institutions have been urged by many of the African governments to “respond to the increasing numbers of violent conflicts, the job market and the changing nature of the global economy, which has increasingly become knowledge-based.” Knowledge has been recognised as both a resource and a source of power in local as well as global relations.

In some sense, each society (and each class within a society) is expected to produce its own institutions and its own intellectuals. One of the peculiarities of the Sub-Saharan African case stems from the “external” origins of the models of reference on which many key institutions of the state and of peacebuilding and social engineering are based. Another important factor in what determines the levels of knowledge production and the kinds of issues being addressed in the peacebuilding and conflict transformation discourse is the precarious condition in which most scholars and higher education institutions are.¹ As funding for capacity-building in peacebuilding comes from foreign donors, much of what is done in this area is largely donor-driven. Yet, whatever the material conditions in which they operate, African peacebuilding practitioners and academic experts and, more generally, the African intelligentsia, are all trying to “make sense” of increasingly complex local and global phenomena relating to violence and are actively involved in the processes of “peacebuilding” and of creating a modern public sphere, which may or may not overlap with the sphere of the state or of individual communities.²

The status of peacebuilding and conflict transformation as a discipline in the social sciences, such as that of higher education in Africa, is very much a function of the status of knowledge in African societies and of what happens to the state and the resources available to the state for knowledge production. The violence that Africa experienced, beginning in the late 1980s and early 1990s, has been attributed to the persistence of “underdevelopment” and poverty. Regardless of how we want to view these phenomena, it is the reality of the African condition: a condition that affects the majority of Africa’s peoples. Ideas about how to deal with these two challenges, poverty and underdevelopment, seem to affect perceptions of everything else and to determine

priorities. Shifts in development paradigms, particularly those that came with structural adjustment, itself an aspect of the advent of globalisation, have led to a wide range of changes in policy concerning the importance given to education in general and to capacity-building for sustainable peacebuilding in particular.

Unlike the history of the social sciences in a general sense, which is anchored in institutions of higher learning and research institutes, the history of peacebuilding and conflict transformation is embedded in other societal institutions including non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil society organisations and community-based organisations, in other words at the grassroots level of society.

Building the capacity of academics and practitioners in peacebuilding and conflict transformation has the potential to lead to the development and articulation of norms and values that will seek to address fundamental issues of direct, structural and cultural violence. Building the capacities of individuals and institutions alike in peacebuilding and conflict transformation will assist in addressing a wide range of problems associated with violence. Developing peacebuilding capacities will be a logical and integral part of processes that seek to address problems and threats of violence in society.

Chris Allen's (1986) review of social science in some regions in Africa, for example, clearly confirms these assertions. Allen's review speaks of the fact that most contributors are not familiar with the unique nature of peace and security research.

What is building capacity for peace?

Capacity-building or capacity development, like other concepts such as empowerment, participation and gender equity, is viewed as essential if peace and development are to take root in post-conflict societies.³ The terms "capacity" and "capacity development"⁴ are both vague. Using the work of the International Development Research Centre on capacity development,⁵ capacity outcomes are defined as "changes in the behaviour, relationships, activities or actions of the people, groups and organisations with whom a programme works directly". Capacity thus represents the overall ability of an individual, organisation or a broader system to perform, bringing together individual competencies and collective capabilities. Capability is a collective skill or ability of a group of individuals to perform a task or function. Competency is the ability of an individual to perform a task. From this understanding of capacity development it follows that the concept deals with levels ranging from micro to macro, as well as interrelationships between the levels.

In general terms, capacity, including knowledge and technology, is the ability of organisations and individual societies to identify constraints and to plan and manage development effectively, efficiently and sustainably.⁶ It involves both the development of human resources, institutions, and society, and a supportive policy environment.⁷ It is the process by which individuals, groups, organisations and societies develop their abilities individually and collectively, to identify their problems and constraints on development, set development objectives, formulate policies and programmes, perform functions and objectives.⁸ Every society has inherent capacities that are compatible

with its own functions and objectives. Post-conflict societies, for example, have very few functioning institutions (political, economic and social), but might have highly functional social institutions and networks that allow them to navigate the post-conflict theatre for peacebuilding by engaging parties of various backgrounds to talk about issues that affect relationships in society.

For capacity-building in post-conflict societies to be successful, it is important to engage societies at three different levels, viz. individual, institutional and societal (micro-, meso- and macro-levels). Designing capacity-building programmes for peacebuilding is in essence to provide opportunities for people and institutions to determine their own future within the general framework of peace and development. Capacity-building should therefore be seen as an approach to peace and development, according to Deborah Eade.⁹

The complexity of facilitating capacity development raises a series of questions on why and how to do it. Case study research has shown that factors shaping and developing capacity can include political, cultural, economic, social and historical influences; the dynamics of the organisational and institutional system in which an intervention is being made; the strategy underlying the intervention, including the entry point, scale of resources and change process; and the nature of the demand and supply for capacity. Supporting and undertaking capacity development therefore requires a broader systems perspective. It asks for interventions that go beyond a narrower strategy focusing essentially on knowledge transfer and skills development.

The lessons learned in different areas of capacity development show that a more development-oriented and comprehensive approach is needed to support sustainable peacebuilding more effectively. This approach should take account of the need to create the required “capacity infrastructure”, particularly in post-conflict societies. This infrastructure is manifested through trained people, well-functioning organisations, good management and available equipment, the so-called “hard capacities”. However, it should also include activities that aim to enhance the overall capacity of individuals and groups of actors.¹⁰

Capacity-building for peace is a process through which individuals, institutions and various entities of governments are strengthened with a view to increasing their capacities to meet challenges that inhibit their efforts to promote sustainable peace. Communities striving to build peacebuilding capacities should in the first instance identify key issues important to their pursuit of peace. The process of issue identification must include an analysis of capacity needs of both formal and informal training. The reason for this two-pronged approach is to develop and strengthen capacity in different areas of society. In addition, capacity-building comes in different forms, including enhancing an organisation’s stock information technology and equipment; it also entails growing the membership of the organisation and increasing its fundraising activities. Capacity-building also includes on-the-job training.¹¹ Capacity development

for peacebuilding in Africa has become a test case for countries riddled by civil war and instability, having important regional and global spill-over effects, including the spread of international terrorism. Capacity development is approached as a broad set of interventions, encompassing actions at the local, national, regional and global levels in which individuals, organisations and systems of organisations are seen as participants, not just recipients in shaping peace and security.¹²

Hauck and Gaspers¹³ have grouped the so-called “soft capacities” into four clusters:

- **Governance capacities** – the ability to create and use an enabling institutional and action environment that allows for articulating views, testing new approaches, setting up accountability mechanisms or forming alliances and structures in public spheres;
- **Bridging capacities** – the ability to use and effectively connect to the broader context in which the actors (in this case all actors involved in peacebuilding processes) operate;
- **Linking capacities** – the ability of actors to formulate and implement a strategy that recognises the need to link up with other organisational and societal levels in their surroundings and to liaise and interact with a multi-actor environment; and
- **Rooting capacities** – the ability of the actors to use endogenous knowledge, processes, structures or traditions to build peace and security. The creation of these abilities is needed to get buy-in and ownership, thereby rooting activities in their action environment in a way that creates legitimacy and sustainable outcomes.

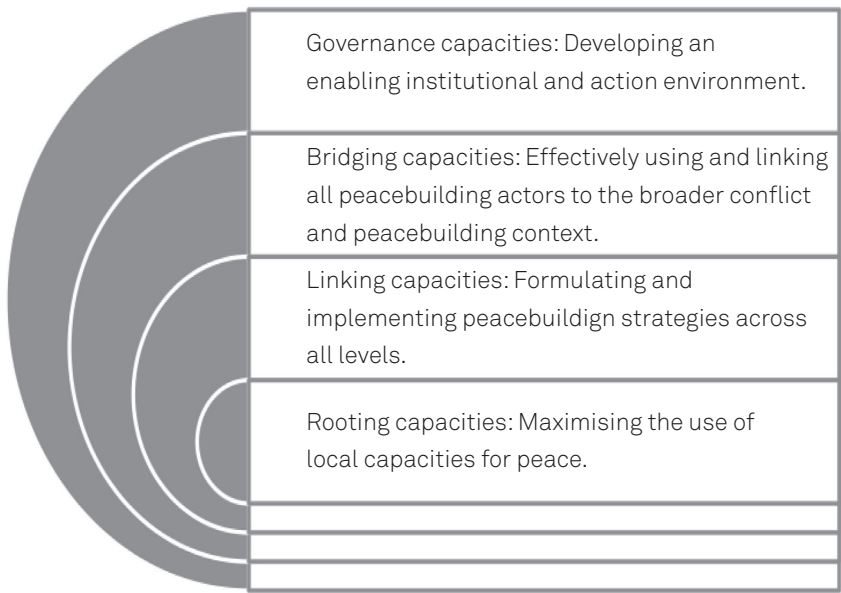


Figure 2.1: Capacities for peace

Source: Tony Karbo adapted from Hauck and Gaspers (2006)

This framework can serve as an orientation to design both hard and soft interventions. It must be adapted to the environment in which interventions will take place. A one-size-fits-all approach will not work. It needs to be applied flexibly, depending on the level of instability of a region. Furthermore, it needs to take account of the social, economic, political and cultural context, as well as the structures and strengths of intermediate institutions and structures, the private sector and other networks.¹⁴

Political, socio-economic, historical and cultural factors all help to shape capacity-building activities. In other words, capacity-building does not deal only with issues of knowledge transfer and skills development. Hauck and Gaspers agree when they assert; “Capacity building, or capacity development, is more than knowledge transfer and skills development. Factors that shape and develop capacity can include: political, cultural, economic, social and historical influences; the dynamics of the organisational and institutional system in which interventions take place; underlying strategies of the interventions and the nature of the demand and supply for capacity.”¹⁵ Supporting and undertaking capacity-building activities require that practitioners take a broader systems perspective.

Levels of intervention in capacity development

Capacity development for peacebuilding ought to be conducted at three different levels: individual, institutional and societal (this is also referred to as the national level of intervention). Societal level capacity development must take into consideration regional contexts and the possible effects of peacebuilding interventions on neighbouring countries. Instability or chaos within a country can have severe spill-over effects on neighbouring countries, threatening the stability of an entire region. Hence capacity-building for sustainable peacebuilding needs to be addressed across different levels and from the perspective of diverse processes of change. Addressing it from global and regional perspectives only, without recognising the interdependence with grassroots levels and the need to initiate interventions at different entry points, will not be sustainable. The complexity of intervention increases the further away one moves from the individual level. Societal and regional levels of intervention require more sophisticated mechanisms of capacity development.

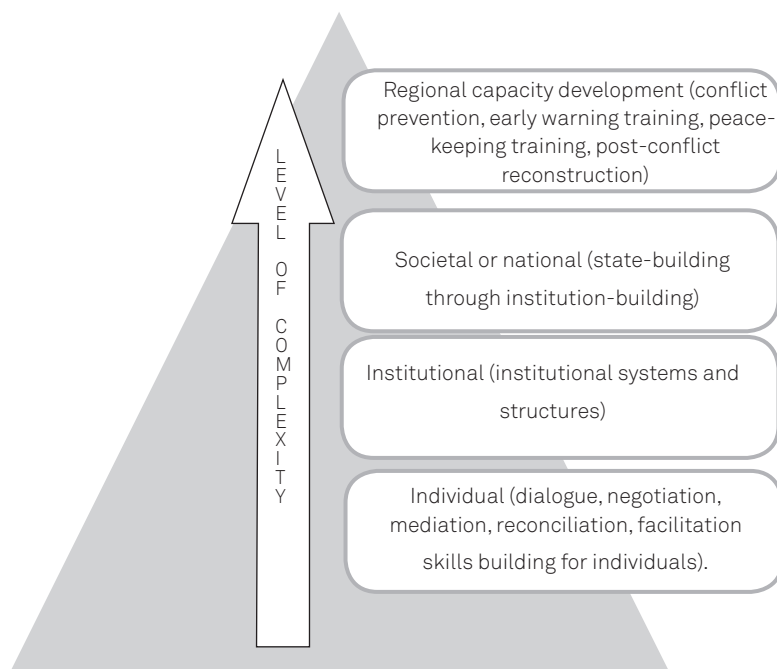


Figure 2.2: Levels of complexity

Source: Tony Karbo adapted from Hauck and Gaspers (2006)

Rationale for peacebuilding capacity-building

Different institutions and organisations undertake capacity-building for peacebuilding at different levels. In the last few decades instability has been rife on the African continent, with critical sub-regional and regional effects. The most significant motivating factor in the interest of capacity development programmes in Africa emanates from the nature of violence and instability soon after the demise of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and the emergence of an African peace and security agenda, endorsed by more than 30 heads of state during the 2002 inaugural summit of the African Union. Others are the realisation that capacity-building is not a one-time, elite-driven process but a holistic process that requires the participation of all actors and stakeholders in a post-conflict context. The international community has also come to the realisation that the signing of peace agreements is not the beginning of peace but rather a stepping stone toward the long and arduous road to rebuilding broken relationships in society. This long process requires the retooling of capacities and in many cases the building of peace capacities for sustainability at different levels (micro, meso and macro) of society.

Core principles of capacity-building for peace

Building capacities for sustainable peacebuilding involve among others seeking entry into communities affected by war and violence through the most credible available

channels: government, local communities, traditional leaders, non-governmental and civil society organisations, and so forth. Whatever channel is used to secure entry, all capacity-building activities for sustainable peace must be anchored on a set of principles that will ensure and sustain trust and cooperation between those bringing in capacity programmes (capacity-building providers), and the intended beneficiaries (capacity-building recipients). At the core of any capacity-building programme is the desire to bring about positive social change. Social change as an outcome of teaching and training is and ought to be deliberate, persistent and sustainable. Capacity-building design strategies are an overall matrix of diverse actors in any given post-conflict environment. Capacity-building for sustainable peacebuilding is in reality practised in different ways depending on the environment in which the capacity development is taking place. However, all capacity-building activities and strategies are based on the following core principles:

Needs-based

Capacity development programmes must be based on what communities need. In post-conflict situations, the first need is security. Without security, the interdependence of individual, institutional and societal needs is compromised, making it difficult to pursue sustainable peacebuilding goals. It is necessary to balance the need for capacity creation¹⁶ and the inherent need for security and development after violent conflict. Communal needs can also be supported better by the development of a well-synchronised vision for the capacity development intervention. Thania Paffenholz¹⁷ cautions that before any attempt at developing conflict transformation interventions, practitioners would be well advised to look closely at the underlying vision and that such a vision should support the stated needs and wishes of communities. In other words, interventions should neither be driven by the needs of interveners nor by the needs of market forces, including donors. Practical and sustainable peaceful outcomes are those derived from the needs of communities.

Participation

Participation suggests a bottom-up approach to the design and implementation of training programmes. It provides for the active participation of beneficiaries in the identification of needs, planning and implementation of capacity programmes. Developing participatory strategies takes account of the need to include beneficiaries of training programmes in the development of a strategic vision and goals for the process, as well as making a strong commitment at the outset to stay the course with the communities. Participation does not mean consultation; participation means community ownership of the capacity-development programme.

Ownership equally means that local staff members occupy leadership positions and locals are recognised for their contributions to peacebuilding at every stage of the

peacebuilding process. Participation also includes the utilisation of local capacities for sustainable peacebuilding. Local knowledge and the conditions for successful peacebuilding are best located within communities. Experiences of violence may imbue certain values into the minds of communities that could provide resilient coping mechanisms for dealing with violence. These strategies should be factored into any training or education programmes developed for building sustainable peace.

Research has shown that when citizens are actively engaged in exercising their voices, they often actively tend to seek accountability from national institutions and agencies, a situation that tends to improve performance and that leads to the increased satisfaction of the basic needs of citizens. Engagement and active participation also facilitate consensus-building and support political reforms needed in post-conflict environments.

Inclusivity

Not only elites should be privy to capacity development. Capacity development for sustainable peacebuilding should be carried out at all levels of society and must include individuals, institutions, the government, political parties, local communities and their agents, civil society organisations, faith-based organisations and other relevant groupings. Excluding any segment of society risks leaving out important stakeholders with important resources for peace.

Inclusivity entails finding the right partners and securing the appropriate entry points. It is important to seek a balance between natural partners and selected partners. An important parameter toward this balance is to determine closely the strengths and weaknesses of all potential partners while developing strong relationships with stakeholders. Thania Paffenholz¹⁸ is of the opinion that government Track I actors and large donors usually enjoy easier access to a wide variety of actors in the conflict arena. While these actors are important players in the process, putting local communities at the forefront of decision-making regarding who should be included is crucial. Inclusivity means making sure all groups with the potential to contribute positively to building sustainable peace, including women, youth and other vulnerable groups at all levels of society, can act as peacebuilding agents.

Transparency

An important principle in capacity-building for peace is ensuring clarity about how the process will be conducted and what types of relationships must be built over time. Also important is setting realistic expectations regarding time frames of activities and budget allocations for each. Being clear about expectations and open about process is an important key to sustainable capacity development for peacebuilding success.

Balance between the community and societal needs and broader visions of capacity-building providers

Maintaining a balance between individual, institutional and societal (micro, meso and macro) level needs and the vision of the capacity-building service provider is a critical element in sustaining trust at the local level. Broken trust emanating from a mismatch between goals and outcomes at all levels is bound to create tensions and may be counterproductive.

Balance between reconciliation and developmental peacebuilding

Reconciliation after civil war is one of the most difficult tasks in post-conflict peacebuilding. Reconciliation is a long-term process that requires trust. The greatest potential for building sustainable peace lies in rebuilding communal and societal relationships, which require in the first instance rebuilding and strengthening the resilience of social, political networks and institutions at the local level. Engaging in developmental activities and initiatives without rebuilding such communal networks will boomerang within a short period of time.

Core Principles of Capacity-building for Peace	
Principle	Focus
Needs-based	The most important need of societies emerging from war is security. Capacity development must focus on this, as well as on livelihood and other basic needs.
Participation	The main area of focus here is to ensure that locals are included in the planning, implementation and evaluation of capacity-development programmes and not just passive recipients of programmes.
Inclusivity	All levels of society, including individuals, institutions, the government, political parties, local communities and their agents, civil society organisations, faith-based organisations and other relevant groupings must be involved.
Transparency	The focus should be on transparency in processes and timeframes, as well as expectations in relationships between programme providers and beneficiaries.
Balance between community and societal needs and broader visions of capacity-building providers	There must be a balance between individual, institutional and societal (micro, meso and macro) level needs and the vision of the capacity-building service providers.

Balance between reconciliation and developmental peacebuilding	The balance between reconciliation and developmental peacebuilding is crucial. Long-term and short-term capacity development programming must be implemented for sustainable reconciliation and peacebuilding outcomes. Conflict-sensitive programming in development work is essential.
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Table 2.1: Core principles of capacity-building for peace

Source: Tony Karbo

Similarly, all development activities must be planned with the long-term view of promoting human security and human development for citizens and communities of post-conflict societies. As a long-term process, development must be viewed as a necessary condition for sustainability. Such a developmental process requires, as well, the rebuilding of structures for peacebuilding and state-building. Political, economic and social recovery hinges on the long-term commitment of all stakeholders in the peacebuilding process. Capacity development in these areas must be given equally sustained support and encouragement if peace is to be sustainable.

Approaches to capacity-building in post-conflict settings

Capacity-building in a post-conflict society is generally difficult to deal with because it involves several approaches to understanding, managing and resolving a conflict at local, regional and international levels. In this regard, training plays a significant role in conflict resolution. Simon Fisher et. al.¹⁹ note that capacity-building has become a slogan and has developed various meanings. In general, it involves “strengthening the qualities, capacities, skills, and resources of both individual members of staff and their organisation.” Work related to conflict and peacebuilding does need knowledge and skills. Therefore organisations too require technical assistance and development so as to be able to respond continuously to changing conditions of post-conflict societies.

Zartman and Rasmussen⁵ highlight the contributions of training to international conflict resolution, including reframing the parties’ conception of their conflict by giving them a theoretical framework while offering participants accumulated knowledge about dynamics and options for settlement of such conflict. Training can also assist participants in developing and improving on communication, negotiations as well as problem-solving skills that are all important for peacebuilding. Nonetheless, it is important to understand that training differs from other kinds of conflict intervention because it has an educational objective. The structure and the content of a training programme are expressly intended to impart new knowledge and skills to the participants. Training for peacebuilding also puts emphases on application of knowledge acquired in practice rather acquisition of knowledge for its own sake.

Training and education

Training for peacebuilding provides participants with foundational knowledge and expertise to function effectively in conflict and post-conflict environments. In the design of any training programme for peace, it is important to secure support and active engagement of key stakeholders if programmes are to achieve their desired objectives and outcomes. Seeking support of stakeholders also includes getting support from funding actors who in the long run have an interest in making their money work for its intended purposes.

In many training programmes local communities are ignored in the conceptualisation, design and evaluation of programmes. Sustainable peacebuilding requires the active participation of members of local communities affected by war. In general, the principles discussed below must be adhered to in the design and implementation of peacebuilding training programmes. I borrow from John Paul Lederach's²¹ principles of peacebuilding and apply these to training and education for peace. Lederach's principles include comprehensiveness, interdependence, sustainability and strategy. This author has replaced the principle of comprehensiveness with holism for the purposes of distinction only.

Holism

For training programmes to be effective and sustainable, they must be designed around peacebuilding themes that take cognisance of the conflict context and dynamics and the desired peaceful outcomes. According to Lederach,²² lasting peace comes from addressing the multiple sources of conflict at multiple levels of society. This suggests that there is a need to develop lenses to identify the needs of those we are working with, a vision of what we are working towards, actions that can get us there and a design or plan that we can use as a guide.²³

Training interventions must take into full cognisance the interdependence of all actors and stakeholders in a conflict or post-conflict context. Different roles that each individual, community, institution and society as a collective play are important in building bridges across ideological, ethnic and other cultural divides that tend to drive wedges into societal relationships. Recognition of this interdependence of actors and their different roles in training for peace is useful when designing peacebuilding training activities. Training programmes oftentimes are designed for the short-term, especially in post-conflict societies. Indeed, it is not desirable to introduce additional institutions and added burdens to fragile institutions, which are also trying to cope with the prevailing post-conflict situations. Training programmes must be need-specific and designed to address conflict-related and development issues.

Sustainability

Building peace is a long-term prospect. Violent conflicts occur over long periods of time, and we can expect peacebuilding to be an equally long-term process. For peacebuilding to be sustainable, training activities need to pay attention to what the training vision is. Neclá Tschirgi²⁴ places emphasis on the importance of committing to building local capacity from the earliest stages of the peacebuilding process. Rather than thinking only about the immediate and coming up with effective responses to issues and crises, sustainability requires that we think about what creates an enduring capacity in the setting for responding to and transforming recurring cycles of conflict and crises. Like sustainable development, sustainable peacebuilding seeks to discover and strengthen the resources rooted in the context of the protracted conflict.²⁵

Strategy

While peacebuilding needs to have a comprehensive overview, specific programmatic actions also need to be strategic. That means learning to respond proactively to emerging, dynamic social situations and meeting immediate concerns and needs, while at the same time reinforcing a larger, longer-term change process. Designing and assessing peacebuilding actions need to link to immediate needs and the desired vision of change. To be crisis-responsive but not crisis-driven requires that we strategically assess the activities we are working on, including the what, where, and how of our activities.²⁶

Examples of capacity-development training workshops

The success of community-based training programmes hinges on how much training and capacity development community members and local authorities require and receive. This is most crucial in post-conflict contexts where capacities (hard and soft) either never existed prior to the conflict or have been totally destroyed or depleted and are no longer available. Depending on need, the most commonly used capacity-development training workshops for peacebuilding include:

Conflict analysis and resolution

Training in conflict analysis and resolution leads to understanding of the root causes and conditions of the conflict. A proper analysis of the root causes of conflicts will facilitate the design and development of interventions that will seek to address underlying causes and conditions of conflicts. Several analytical frameworks have been developed by various scholars, including the ABC Triangle, Conflict Map, Conflict Timelines, Conflict Tree, The Onion, and so forth. These analytical frameworks assist in developing a detailed analysis of a conflict from different perspectives and exploring specific issues that affect a conflict. A detailed analysis of a conflict generally leads to problem-solving. Problem-solving workshops have also recently been used at community level, where locals are

given the tools to use local specifications to analyse and collectively find solutions to community conflicts.

Dialogue

Dialogue can be viewed as one means – if not the classical one – of dealing constructively with conflicts.²⁷ The process of initiating, organising and facilitating dialogues has become one of the key methods of peacebuilding. Scholars, educators and practitioners argue that dialogues are an important element in engaging with the opposite side in a non-confrontational manner, to “humanise” the interaction and to explore ways of preventing or resolving the conflict.²⁸ Dialogue seeks to create deeper understanding of the needs and interests of self and the other. Its goals are to promote the transformation of relationships and encourage problem-solving to occur.

Empowerment

In capacity-building for peace, an important strategy is to build a critical mass of people who have skills that will increase their self-confidence and give them a greater understanding of rights. This is done with a view to improving the ability of local communities to take ownership of and therefore responsibility for the future. Empowerment training includes working with victims and survivors at the grassroots level, connecting victims and survivors with wider society, connecting victims and survivors from diverse sides and linking victims and survivors to the policy environment.²⁹ It should be noted, however, that empowerment training will only be effective if it is holistic and carried out at multiple levels of society.

Mediation and negotiation

Negotiation can be broadly defined as a face-to-face discussion for the purpose of reaching an agreement on a situation that is perceived as a problem or conflict.³⁰ Although the goal of mediation is also to reach an agreement among parties through negotiation processes, mediation differs from negotiation in the sense that mediation involves the participation of a third party that takes responsibility for establishing and supporting the negotiation process.

Facilitation

The process of facilitation also requires the intervention of a third party in a conflict situation. The facilitator is responsible for directing the communication process. The role of a facilitator is to help parties in a conflict communicate effectively with a view to improving understanding.

These different types of training have over time undergone different transformations. The methods and strategies for capacity development have been diversified and deepened. Whereas at their initial developmental stages training

workshops were targeted at mid-level elites, over time such workshops have increasingly been used and proven to be beneficial at all levels and with all stakeholders.

Reconstructing formal education in order to encourage national unity and peace and to change relationships that are negative as a result of the past has become a peacebuilding objective for several governments, especially those coming out of civil wars and genocide. This has become common since the reconstruction of Germany's national education system after World War II. Obura,³¹ in a report entitled "Never again: Education reconstruction in Rwanda", asserts that a number of governments have conceptualised formal education as a tool to combat violence, promote peace and foster democratic principles. The report concludes that, "education is the key to reduction of community violence".³² In the aftermath of a civil war or genocide, different NGOs, peace educators, post-conflict development practitioners and governments believe in the healing power of providing education for all and granting school-age children and youth equal access to education. Rwanda for example, following the 1994 genocide, decided to use formal education as a peacebuilding tool in the country's national reconstruction programme. The government has continued to search for processes, policies and programmes to build capacity for the national education system so as to foster national unity and peace.³³

Institutional capacity-building

Institutions at the community level come in various forms and serve various functions. Among the best established and widely known forms of community-based institutions are associations, cooperatives, community-based organisations and traditional chiefs and village leaders' organisations. At the centre of these institutions is an entity designed to provide a forum for participatory dialogue, collective decision-making and taking action on decisions made. These institutions invariably act as legitimate intermediaries between local communities and state authorities and in some instances can also act as direct conduits through which international agencies and governments implement development activities.

Kenneth Bush³⁴ describes the role of governments in promoting democratic processes through capacity-building of local institutions regarding service delivery as a tool for conflict prevention, conflict management and sustainable peacebuilding. The report highlights key areas to which governments can contribute to manage conflicts, including provision of health and social services, which entails prevention of communicable diseases, access to and availability of potable water and maintenance of sanitary standards in the handling of food and management of waste.

In post-conflict societies, it is wise to target marginalised groups deliberately in the design and implementation of peacebuilding capacity development activities. While community-based peacebuilding approaches are by their very nature designed to be holistic and inclusive, it is prudent to include strategies that target vulnerable and marginalised groups deliberately. Building partnerships between government

institutions and local communities is equally important for the success and sustainability of community-based approaches to capacity-building for peace. Training government officials and developing government institutions are vital in supporting community-based capacity-building programmes. Supporting and providing training to community-based institutions also requires that government institutions and officials have the capacity for such interaction; without this, developing partnerships will not be feasible.

In Zimbabwe, for example, NGOs such as the Peace-building and Capacity Development Foundation (PACEPF) have been exemplary and committed to empowering community leaders to handle conflict situations and build peace, thereby creating an environment conducive to development. PACEPF has a mission of 'enhancing leadership capacity to lead democratically, manage conflicts peacefully, build peace, and meaningfully facilitate in issues of economic, social including gender and HIV/AIDS, cultural and environmental development. This will be done through training, advocacy and lobbying support, information sharing, and the distribution of peace promotion materials'.³⁵ Meanwhile, agencies such as Private Agencies Co-operating Together (PACT), with a passion for developing the capacity of others to discover and build their own solutions and take ownership of their own future, have capacity development programmes aimed at improving the institutional capacity of local-civil society organisations with varying goals.³⁶ In peacebuilding, PACT leads efforts to create a demand for peace, enhance stability and manage conflict. PACT's approach is based on three elements: to increase the ability of local communities to plan and manage activities that build peace, to increase the ability of local organisations to assist communities in implementing peace-building plans and to increase the ability of civil society and faith-based networks in building, consolidating and safeguarding peace. PACT's approach encourages reconciliation and healing as soon as possible, even before larger-scale conflicts have been fully resolved, and favours traditional conflict-resolution methods over imported ones.³⁷

The University for Peace, through its Africa Programme (UPAP), uses a hybrid approach to capacity-building, combining individual and institutional capacity-building programmes as a means of achieving peacebuilding goals. Individual capacity development takes the form of short courses on conflict prevention, management and resolution, peace, conflict and development, peace research, gender and peacebuilding, non-violent transformation of conflicts and human rights, justice and peace. Individuals participating in short courses usually represent an institution. What UPAP has not been able to establish is whether or not these individual capacities have trickled down to the institutions represented in the training. The second approach UPAP has used quite successfully is working with regional organisations in developing need-based courses for these organisations. For example, over a period of three years, UPAP worked with organisations such as COMESA in developing research on various themes, including the cost of conflict and war economies in Africa. UPAP also worked with the Nile

Basin Initiative (NBI) to develop training programmes in mediation and negotiation for member states.

In the last three years, UPAP has been networking with universities in the Great Lakes Region and it is designing need-based courses for a master's degree in peace and conflict-related programmes. In this programme, UPAP worked with 10 universities in nine countries, building the capacity of individuals in these universities as well as assisting in the development of M.A. programmes in various specialities in the partner universities.

Challenges of capacity-building for peace

Volker Hauck and Jan Gaspers argue that the analysis of practice shows that capacity development at continental and regional levels, as well as at the national level and below, encounters significant institutional bottlenecks.³⁸ Capacity development at these levels block substantial change in security (military and police forces), rule of law (political freedoms, good governance, human rights) and welfare (economic, social, and environmental). Policies to link capacity development interventions for peacekeeping with state reconstruction and long-term conflict prevention exist but are not sufficiently supported in terms of long-term commitment and resource allocations. The importance of linking national actions with regional, continental and international action is recognised, but not sufficiently prioritised by African leaders and their international partners.

Capacity-building for sustainable peacebuilding has undergone different transformations and has generated a body of knowledge that is useful when used appropriately. However, this knowledge is still scattered and targeted at individuals and not institutions, a situation that does not allow for the trickle-down effect of capacity-building programmes for sustainability. What is missing perhaps in the broadest sense is the coordination of capacity-building interventions at the micro-level meso-level and macro- (individual, institutional and societal) level. Interventions at these levels are not sufficiently coordinated to have a sustainable impact on communities that have experienced violence and protracted conflicts.

Capacity-building for peacebuilding continues to be project-based and projects often do not have sustainability as a driving objective in their design. Even if the design and implementation of capacity-building programmes include participation and ownership of programmes by local communities, this is in theory only. Consultations about processes take place at the beginning of a project but are soon abandoned once the project is under way. This leaves communities and locals with no sense of ownership of the project and the process through which it is implemented. This can perhaps be explained by the fact that most capacity-building and capacity-development programmes are externally driven and externally funded. In addition, the inadequacies of such interventions emanate from the perceptions of peacebuilding and development actors on the lack of capacity for peace within societies in conflict. Designing

peacebuilding interventions only from the perspectives of peacebuilding agencies is at best inadequate.

For success, peacebuilding interventions must appreciate community capacities for conflict and peace. It has been proven over and over again that communities are not just passive recipients and victims of conflicts, but are also active participants in shaping the nature, trajectory, longevity and resolution to violent conflict. The need to engage local communities actively in sustainable peacebuilding can therefore not be overemphasised. Capacity-building for sustainable peacebuilding must proactively seek to build upon the capacity of communities to plan and implement their own community-led initiatives used to recover from violent conflicts.

Community-based approaches to training may in the end facilitate relationship-building at the individual level, with individuals directly participating in training activities, but may not translate into relationship-building at the broader institutional and societal levels.

Conclusion

Post-conflict peacebuilding is a tricky business. It is clear that possibilities for sustainable peacebuilding exist, although peacebuilding is still not carried out in a holistic manner. Regardless of what approach is taken in building capacity for peace, interveners and capacity-building service providers should bear in mind that ultimately it is the local communities, the internal actors in the conflict areas, who will be responsible for building and sustaining peace. These actors will in the final analysis determine the nature and level of reconciliation and transformation that will take place. Involving them and giving them true ownership of the process is the only guarantee to sustainability of capacity-building programmes in post-conflict contexts.

Many peacebuilding interventions fail to achieve stated objectives not because the objectives do not meet established criteria, but rather because peacebuilding actors fail to include the most important actors – the actors located in the spaces where violent conflicts had occurred. Community-based participation in peacebuilding suggests the involvement of local communities as the most significant actors in building sustainable peace. Since communities are both players and victims in conflict, it is obvious that they should be included in designing and implementing capacity-building programmes and mechanisms for building sustainable peace, though often they are not. Dealing with this dilemma requires addressing some of the reasons responsible for this phenomenon, such as lack of trust, lack of communication between different levels of interventions, lack of capacity at the national level and other practical difficulties in post-conflict settings, such as insecurity. Of importance is the search for creative ways to overcome these barriers.

Discussing the impact of education and training on communities recovering from violent conflict is a necessary prerequisite for effective peacebuilding programmes in post-conflict societies. Whereas peacebuilding activities can have positive impacts on

communities, the negative effects of interventions need to be highlighted with a view to learning from them. All those offering teaching and training programmes for building sustainable peace need to be aware of security and political sensitivities in areas of their work. Programmes that are designed must be sensitive to cultural specificities and realities. The best way to accomplish this is to use local capacities for peace.

Policy recommendations

The need for capacity in post-conflict societies is acute and most challenging for developmental peacebuilding. Considering that Africa has recently concluded its first ever capacity-development decade, much needs to be done in this area, particularly in post-conflict contexts. The diversity of capacity-building interventions for peacebuilding from within reflects the myriad contexts in which capacity-building takes place. Capacity development and capacity-building are as relevant in government institutions as they are in rural communities. Local community groups have the relevant capacities, especially in peacebuilding, to sustain reconciliation programmes. What is often needed and might be missing could simply be the management structures and access to information and technology essential for sustainable capacity-building. To ensure the effectiveness of capacity-building programmes for peace, the following policy recommendations will be useful.

1. The primary aim of capacity-building programmes ought to be the development of local capacities for peace. Building local capacities must be conducted with a view to giving local constituents who are the primary beneficiaries of all capacity-building programmes the opportunity to participate in programme formulation, implementation and evaluation. Without the active participation of local constituents, attaining sustainable peace will be difficult. Local participation will engineer democratic processes and promote collective ownership. It is necessary to develop a network of local peacebuilders, including local leaders and community organisations that have competencies in dialogue, mediation and reconciliation processes. Best practices in capacity development instruct us that using local capacities in a participatory manner guarantees stability and sustainable reconciliation.
2. Contemporary conflicts in Africa are not only of a protracted nature, but also have the propensity to spill over into neighbouring countries in a region. Conflicts in Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, the DRC and elsewhere on the continent were quick to spill over into territories outside the origin of conflict. For peacebuilding efforts through capacity-building to be effective, regional conflict dynamics must be taken into full consideration in the design and implementation of capacity-development programmes. Development of regional dialogue and co-ordination programmes and activities will be a first and crucial step in addressing regional capacity deficits.

At the policy level, a coordinated approach to capacity-building in areas such as early warning and combating the proliferation of small arms is crucial in the development of a coordinated approach to combating the spill-over effects of violent conflict at regional level. Conflict prevention capacities must be built across national states with a view to addressing issues such as proliferation of small arms, support for insurgencies and rebel groups by one country in a region, and so forth. Cooperation in these areas and in the development of a regional framework for peace is essential in building sustainable peace within regions.

3. Sustainable peacebuilding capacity development requires the infusion and integration of post-conflict contextual analysis with development practice. Understanding the contextual frames within which peacebuilding will take place will assist in transforming development practice as a whole. There is a need for all actors in the peacebuilding context to understand the role of conflict management and peacebuilding capacities in a post-conflict context with a view to illuminating the development challenges and strategies to address them. Integrating conflict resolution and peacebuilding into development planning and programming can create and nurture conflict sensitivity, a requisite approach to sustainability in post-conflict societies. At both the policy and practical levels, it is important to develop capacities in the harmonisation of post-conflict reconstruction and development strategies.
4. Policies related to post-conflict reconstruction at the national level need to be harmonised with regional and continental policies.
5. Capacity development for sustainable peace is a continuous long-term process. Staying the course for the long-term is important for consolidating peace.

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Let us talk: African contributions to peacebuilding

John Paul Lederach and Angela Lederach

Introduction

The term peacebuilding emerged with greater prominence in the lexicon of peace and conflict studies in the decade of the 1990s. Conceptually and practically the idea of peacebuilding provided a response to the rise of armed, protracted conflicts that were taking place in many countries and regions across the globe and to the increasing number of peace processes attempting to end those wars. In 1992 Boutros Boutros-Ghali released his policy brief titled, *An agenda for peace*. He framed the term peacebuilding primarily as the activities of rebuilding societies, once a peace agreement had been signed. While this gave the concept much wider recognition and legitimacy, it placed peacebuilding as a post-conflict phenomenon and captured only a part of what peacebuilding proposed to address. The wider understanding of building peace includes activities and initiatives to reduce violence and increase justice through peaceful means prior to, during and after open and often sustained periods of armed conflict. A more common understanding suggests peacebuilding as a ‘comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates, and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships’ (Lederach, 1997).¹

The challenge of peacebuilding requires a wide-ranging, systemic approach in response to deep-rooted violent conflict. Key to the comprehensive approach is a view of peace as a process undertaken both at higher political levels as well as local communities. In the course of the past two decades increasingly more attention, research and legitimacy have emerged related to the community level activities that would not easily have been included in the purview of international relations and realist schools of thought. Not surprisingly, important theoretical and practical advancements in the field of peacebuilding have originated from communities most directly affected by deep-rooted conflict. Given the significant number of protracted armed conflicts in many regions of Africa over the last two decades, the contributions to the practice of grassroots peacebuilding have been unprecedented from this continent and have profoundly shaped the wider field. In this chapter we will highlight a few of these contributions by looking at case studies primarily from Somalia and Liberia. We will first describe particular processes and then propose ways in which these represent practical, context-based initiatives with theoretical salience and contribution. The case studies emerge from first-person experience and citation of relevant literature.

Case study 1: the wandering Somali elders

The first case study took place in the outskirts of Hargeisa in early 1991. A few years earlier longtime strongman Siad Barre had fallen from power. While unified against Barre, the armed conflict soon descended into sub-clan fighting, animosities rising sharply between militia strongmen who wished to accede to power in the political vacuum. The most severe drought experienced in decades exacerbated the violence and the displacement of people across this far eastern portion of the Horn of Africa. The worst of this fighting tracked towards Mogadishu, the national capital in the south of the country. In the face of a daily-televised humanitarian disaster the international community, desperate to find ways to end the fighting, mobilised to provide much needed food and shelter to millions of Somalis on the brink of disaster. Over the next decades, the intensive efforts, including multiple internationally convened peace processes, hundreds of temporary ceasefires, interim governments and massive humanitarian relief deliveries, have not been able to reconstitute a stable and functioning national government in Somalia.

In the midst of this sustained violence, extraordinary exceptions and grassroots efforts at peacebuilding emerged. Perhaps the most robust and comprehensive, though still poorly documented, was a process of reconciliation that was initiated in the north-west of the country. Hargeisa, as the largest city in the region, has provided the historic hub of political activity. The people in the north-west, as long-time adversaries of Siad Barre and resistant to his autocratic rule, had suffered excessive repression from the dictator for years. Armed resistance first emerged early in this region and by the time Barre fell, fighting had emerged and spread from west to east in the northern part of the country. With Barre's demise the violence turned inwards and the people of the north began to suffer the challenges of severe sub-clan fighting, identities around which many of the militias coalesced.

In the midst of this sustained violence, a grassroots effort led by three elders, two sheiks and a sultan, emerged to build what they referred to as a reconciliation process. *Nabadraadin*, or 'let us talk', enjoyed great prominence among those most affected in local communities. Nomadic by background, the three elders embarked on a rather remarkable journey. Each came from one of three sub-clans but was widely recognised and among the most respected elders in the region. Following lengthy discussions within their own sub-clans and then together, the three formed an *ergada*, a travelling group of elders that would venture out to meet the other warring sub-clan elders in an effort to persuade them to participate in a *guurti*, a gathering of elders, poets, spokespersons and chosen representatives of the various sub-clans.² As Farah noted, they named themselves with the rather modest term, *dab damin* or fire extinguishers.

Given their culture, travel was nothing new. They would move by small convoy, and where necessary by camel and on foot, from one village in the region to the next. Their proposal was to go from as far west as Boroma and to the east into Sanaag and Erigavo. When their international partners asked about their safety, given the explosive

fighting across the region, they only smiled and said, ‘This is our place, our people. It is our duty. They will recognise us. Each of us is from one of these places. We travel together’. In greater detail, they also noted that women had already gone ahead of them. As later documented by anthropologist Farah, women had indeed prepared the way. Located as they were in cross-clan marriages, women often functioned as the informal early diplomats, travelling safely in the midst of war from their clan of marriage to their clan of birth. In the lineage culture of this north-eastern region, women experienced the war far differently from the men. Their fathers and brothers were fighting their husbands and sons. In times of open fighting women could traditionally travel from their sub-clan of marriage back to their sub-clan of birth, effectively creating the first contacts and appeals for violence to stop and peace negotiations to open. So, the elders explained, ‘our way has been prepared by the women’.

When asked what they would ‘do’ one elder explained, ‘Somalis say, “The answer to the problem is more talk.”’ At each stop the elders would seek their counterparts and talk. One round of talk would not be enough. It would only start the process. Few – if any – commitments were expected in a first conversation, except that the sub-clan elders they met would in turn talk internally among themselves and their communities. The *ergada* might grow by a member or two and would return, going back to visit each area repeatedly for more talk. As the rounds of contact and discussions progressed, some specific sub-clan issues would be identified and inter-clan bilateral negotiations might be proposed. Peacebuilding, they said, required long discussions. The elders projected that over time these rounds would bring together more and more groups until a *grand guurti* would emerge as consensus among a wide set of people. In this larger *guurti* many would sit together and discuss the wider issues of the region and the steps needed to end the internecine wars. This was their primary goal: to create a region-wide consultation culminating in a *grand guurti*.

Three years later, in 1993, their walking group arrived in Boroma, en masse. From February to May a *grand guurti* was held in the north-west of the region. Known as the Boroma Conference, this *guurti* brought together hundreds of delegates and thousands of observers from the sub-clans. The deliberations lasted for six months. Talk, poetry and song filled the days and nights. The delegates probed and argued, went round and round the issues and proposals, the grievances and demands. Everyone present had an opportunity to speak. As a certain proverb puts it, ‘You can deny a Somali food but you can never take away his word.’ Little by little a consensus proposal eventually emerged: The wider region declared itself independent as the Republic of Somaliland. The road to the declaration was built on hundreds of discussions; initiated, failed and re-initiated negotiations; small and larger sub-clan agreements; compensations and more talk. Some say it never really did end. The process was simply transferred to another level: the formation of a parliament, space for traditional leaders, and local peace initiatives between the sub-clans that were still fighting.

Now, nearly two decades since the three elders wandered out to meet with their counterparts, Somaliland still claims independence, though little international recognition has come its way. However, the north-west and north-east of what was Somalia have experienced far less fighting than other regions to the south. The process in the early 1990s, called by Farah the ‘roots of reconciliation’, stands as perhaps one of the most extraordinary and least documented processes of its kind.

Lessons from the wandering elders

The ‘wandering elders’ provide an important context to explore the theory and practice of peacebuilding. Several specific lessons emerge from this initiative.

Firstly, the wandering elders demonstrate the importance of the local community to build sustainable peace. The process of travel to the local communities and sub-clans created a proxemics of process. Negotiations initiated through careful consultation brought peace within a very accessible range. People could hear, speak and see the process. The peace process, though never formally named as such, was not experienced as distant from but rather very close to home. Their efforts to build peace required sustained interaction and exchange. People met, talked and talked some more. To outside eyes, this talk seemed directionless. The elders’ engagement did not constitute a real peace process in the Western sense of conflict resolution. It felt too aimless, almost as if they were wandering about without a clear timeline or projected results. Theirs represented a large-scale circle process. The circling emerged around two key components: iteration and iteration. They travelled out and around the region and they did it more than once. They literally built peace on *travelling* and *talking*. At times they relied on oral poetry, lengthy discussions without end or even a sense of destination. The interactions and demands often went in more than one direction. It seemed, ironically, to propose more talk, bringing people to a larger meeting. At the same time the interaction required contextualised micro-talk that penetrated into far more specific grievances and issues related to particular localities and sub-clan conflicts. In other words, the talk was multidirectional and multidimensional.

Secondly, women played a critical role in paving a way for the *ergada*. When violence increased in the region, making safe travel difficult for the *ergada*, the women opened the first contacts and commitments to talk. The women, who could move fluidly between the warring clans of their husbands and brothers, were uniquely positioned to cultivate peace in their land. They played a critical role in laying a solid foundation for the *grand guurti*, mediating between the clans and the sub-clans so that talk was possible.

Thirdly, many of the early discussions between the clans directly evoked a contentious past filled with emotions, and at times fuelled anger and justifications. Rather than ignore the past and the emotions associated with past grievances, the *ergada* embraced a wide range of emotions; they simultaneously reached towards the past in order to pave a new way into the future. The case study of the ‘wandering elders’ opens

an intriguing understanding of time. The past, present and future flip-flopped on top of each other as if there was no real distinction between them. Rituals, eating, tea chewing *qu'at* late into the night were vehicles, defying the notion of a 'meeting' and certainly defying the notion of 'effective use of time'. Circling talk engages. It evokes.

In the past several decades during periods of war, most of those fought between contending groups coming from the same country, the international community generally heard reference to peace only at times when a signed peace agreement solidified. The events leading to the accord are commonly referred to as the peace process, creating an image of high-level officials from government, military and opposition groups conducting negotiations. 'Peace process' also creates an image of a singular, 'forward-moving' sequential process.³ As we have seen in the story of the wandering elders; the idea of a singular peace process represents a misnomer. The seemingly directionless talk of the elders led to one of the more remarkable reconciliation processes in Somalia. For the Somali elders, peace required a multidimensional and multidirectional approach that eventually gave rise to the Boroma conference.

Peacebuilding encompasses multiple levels and a range of different but very much needed activities that work simultaneously to create a wider system oriented toward building constructive and much needed peaceful change in settings of conflict. For the purposes of this chapter, we wish to explore several key analytical lenses, which help bring into focus the different levels, actors, and activities that make up the wider system of peacebuilding. Each lens is useful for bringing into focus an aspect of a wider and more complex reality. The case study of the wandering elders provides two lenses, one related to our understanding of approaches to peacebuilding and the second to our understanding of temporal realities.

Lens 1: Approaches to peacebuilding

One useful lens considers the conflict setting as a population with multiple levels of leadership depicted as a pyramid.⁴ In Figure 1 the pyramid describes the population affected by the conflict. The pinnacle of the pyramid represents a small number of highly visible leaders known to almost everyone in the setting. The base of the pyramid represents the community-level or grassroots leadership and local populations and as such represents a large number of people. The middle section holds leaders, networks and organisations that have relationships that connect the highest level officials with the local communities.

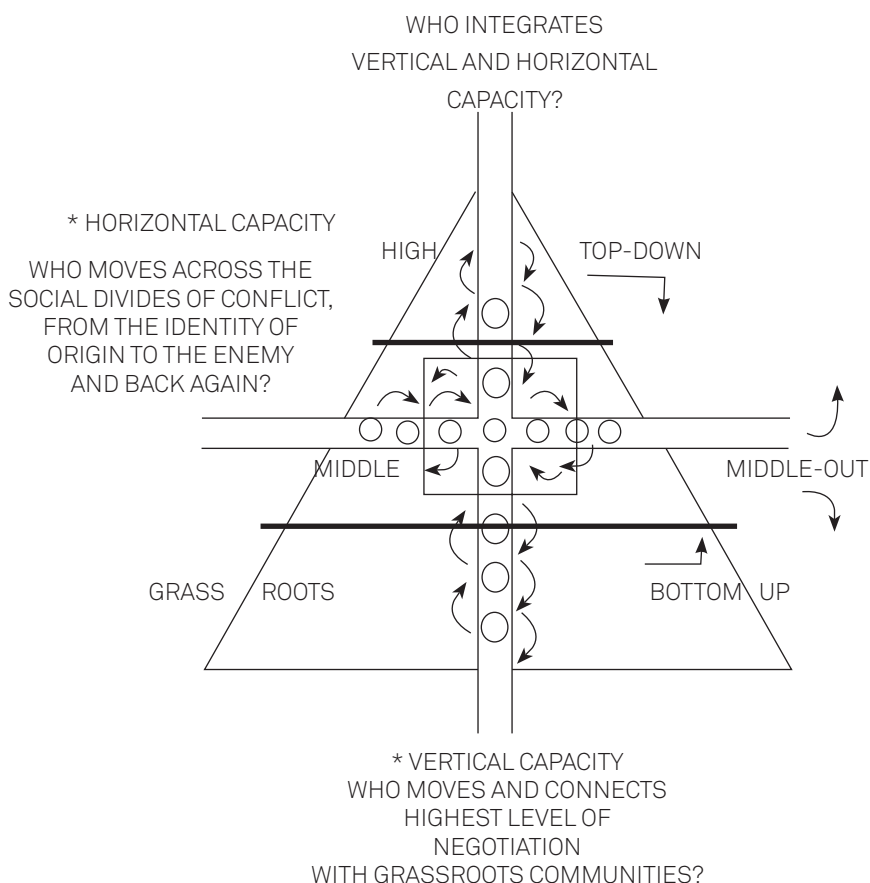


Figure 3.1: Pyramid⁵

This lens suggests that approaches to peacebuilding must respond in different ways to the needs of these different levels and engage leaders appropriately on each level. It further argues for the need to connect and integrate these levels for more comprehensive and sustained processes of change to emerge with the capacity to end violence and build healthy relationships. A closer look at each level suggests three broad approaches or theories of change. First, at the highest level we find the top-down approach to change, based primarily on nation-state diplomacy. The main idea of this approach is to locate and then bring into dialogue and negotiation the key leaders and decision-makers representing the conflicting groups. Top-down change suggests that high-level leaders, often very few in number, must negotiate and agree. Their agreement then requires implementation that translates into delivering ‘down’ the peace arrangement to the rest of society. This approach recognises that highly visible leaders represent key decision-makers with the power to affect political and military arrangements that end the war. The challenge of this approach in contemporary conflicts is that many

people are affected by those decisions and may feel they do not have adequate voice and representation in the process that forged the agreements, and may therefore not be in favour of what has been decided.

At the opposite end of the pyramid we find the bottom-up approach to peacebuilding. Here the starting point is local communities. This approach suggests that war affects all communities in the setting and that each community has the need to address conflicts that are immediate and close at hand. Contemporary internal conflicts do not play out exclusively on a national stage between high-level leaders. More often than not, local communities suffer and need to work out peace among themselves and their neighbours who represent different sides of multiple divides. Bottom-up approaches suggest two guiding principles. Firstly, peace is not just the responsibility of national leaders; it is the responsibility of everyone. Secondly, for peace to last, people have to participate and have adequate connection to the changes and proposals that affect their lives. This approach requires a lot of conversation and time, and not all communities will move toward consensus and agreement at the same pace. However, bottom-up peacebuilding offers the promise that greater involvement emerging from local levels translates into increasing the sustainability of agreements and peace reached.

The middle-range approach essentially builds a web of relationships and connections that cut across the setting of conflict.⁶ This approach provides an analytical tool for strategy development based on exploration and making visible ‘vertical’ and ‘horizontal’ relational spaces and connections. Vertical capacity looks at relational spaces that connect people up and down, from the community to higher national levels of leadership in the society. It asks: Who has a relationship with the highest level of leadership in the country and good relationships with the local communities? Horizontal capacity, on the other hand, refers to relationships between people and groups that cut across the identity divisions that may exist in a given location, be those ethnic, religious, racial or linguistic. It asks: Who can move from their group of origin across the conflict lines and have a relationship with people from the other side, and go back again? The key to the web approach requires integration where people combine vertical and horizontal linkages, thus creating connections between different sets of people and different levels of leadership to the peace initiatives going on at the same time. This approach promises a capacity to build an infrastructure of connections that will sustain dialogue and engagement. The challenge is that it can be difficult and dangerous work, and to be successful the linkages have to be dynamic and adaptive, while sustaining a constant relationship over a longer period of time.

Looking at the case of Somalia in the 1990s, we can compare these approaches. At the same time the elders we spoke to in Hargeisa initiated their travels, an international peace conference hosted by the international community began in neighbouring Ethiopia. The series of peace conferences facilitated by the international community and held in Addis Ababa focused initially on militia and political leaders. It was a ‘national’ process. In the end declarations of ceasefires were proposed and offers to

form a national government emerged, though neither of these came to fruition. These were, from the view of international conferences, properly facilitated meetings, run with clear agendas and with short specified time frames for action. Yet they effectively failed. Despite the efforts made to bring the leaders together, their voices never interacted with the communities on the ground. The national peace talks could not sustain their proposed agreements for change.

On the other hand, the wandering elders culminating in the Boroma Conference provide us with an example of a web approach, emerging initially at the grassroots level. They created an *ergada* by joining respected elders together from the three major warring clans. When the violence became too heated, they recognised that women had the unique ability to move fluidly between the conflicting tribes and called on them to mediate the way. They created spaces where recognised local elders, community leaders, women and villagers could interact directly. While still focused regionally, they spun a web that involved thousands of participants. Their repeated conversations and local *guurtis* built an infrastructure of connections that eventually gave way to the *grand guurti* and the declaration of the independent state of Somaliland that has greatly reduced the level of open violence, particularly as compared to other parts of Somalia, addressed local sub-clan grievances in numerous areas, and has held for nearly two decades.

Lens 2: The aspect of time

Time and timeframes pose a unique challenge to peacebuilding and require a lens to focus on its complexity. Time here is taken in its larger meaning, as in the past, the present and the future. In settings of protracted and violent conflict, survival requires a response to daily crises and attention to immediate needs, which often creates a crisis-driven mentality in which the immediate present forms the main timeframe within which people think and act. The challenge of peacebuilding is finding approaches that respond to the immediate crisis while simultaneously addressing the grievances of the past and embracing a long-term vision of the future.

In all armed conflicts and violence the past carries significant impact and an energy that cannot be ignored. The deeper patterns of relational animosity and division embedded in the past create the root causes of the conflict. The challenge of peacebuilding is to recognise the deep hurt that people may have experienced over years and in some cases, generations. The Somali elders recognised the need for talk, the need to evoke the past and provide space for grievances. They understood that the ‘past’ is not dead. It is alive in that people seek to redress what they experience as wrongdoing forced on their communities. In many settings of conflict, people express the need to account publicly and openly for what has transpired. This has taken the form of truth commissions and even tribunals to deal with atrocities and injustices.

At the other end of the time perspective we find the need to address vision and the hopes of people for their families, communities and nation. Thinking long-term requires the capacity to reflect and strategise about the goals and direction of the wider society. Vision provides a way forward that must develop new ways to respond to immediate crises while addressing past grievances and promoting sustainable changes that will lead to the desired future. Effective peacebuilders are crisis-responsive rather than crisis-driven. In the case of the elders they essentially used a circular process of conversations that permitted communities to express grievances about the past and hopes for the future as overlapping realities that took considerable time, prior to achieving consensus that formed acceptable proposals.

On the other side of the continent, mothers in Liberia were beginning their own process of talk. Their talk, moving fluidly through past, present and future, is illustrated through the case of the *tree of frustration*.

Case study 2: The tree of frustration

When the guns finally went silent in Liberia, ex-combatants began to reappear from the cover of the bush. A generation of youth with a lost childhood – child soldiers, child mothers – carried the heavy weight of an unspeakable past on their backs while groping for a future with no horizon in sight. Their feet took them along the roads leading toward home, the communities they once shared as family, the places from which far too many were stolen and kidnapped a decade earlier. Not uncommonly, they would stop at the edge of town, dwellers on a threshold between the simultaneous push and pull of blood: the pull of the ancestral flow born in the wombs of their mothers and the push of the pools of blood they had spilt in the madness of the war. Outside one small village mothers watched as the young soldiers started to appear, gathering by day in the shade of a large *kum* tree at the entrance to the village. With no guns, little food, ragged clothes and a decade of matted hair down their backs, they had nowhere to go; they could not return to the bush but did not know how to enter the village they had destroyed. The lies their commanders had told them and the shame of who they were carried them only as far as the tree at the edge of town. Day in and day out they lived under the tree. They named it the ‘*tree of frustration*’.⁷

Every now and then a few women would leave some food and in time they began to talk to the boys at the tree. Little by little they built a relationship. Sometimes they sang. Sometimes they stayed and ate. Sometimes they talked about the ancestors and the community. Sometimes they prayed. Months passed. The women started asking why these youths did not come back into the community, until finally the boys agreed to try it. The women told the boys their ‘bush’ appearance scared everybody in town. Their wild unkempt hair had to go. In this village mothers were responsible for cutting hair, so together they agreed to have a ‘cutting hair ritual’ under the tree. Cutting these boys’ hair was an act of reintegration and of love. A weight far greater than hair fell from

the boys' shoulders; the mothers' hands and scissors spoke: 'We forgive you. We want you to come back and be our sons.'

While a real and growing relationship began to emerge between the ex-combatants and the women, the men, responsible for recreating village order after the violence, wanted to deal with the boys without the women. They relegated the women to less important roles as forms of negotiations developed between the returning combatants and the village elders. The mothers who had the courage to speak under the tree found themselves voiceless and marginalised in the village deliberations and they protested. Strong-minded elders reverting to old practices put the women 'back in their place'. But the former child soldiers from the Tree of Frustration gathered on the side of the women, 'These are the mothers who have brought us back into the community. You must listen to them'. As one woman expressed it: 'If these boys had not stood up for us, we would not have gotten anywhere'.⁸

Lessons from the tree of frustration

The capacity of the mothers at the tree of frustration to surround their former perpetrators with love, starting with the simple act of leaving food, seems extraordinary given what had transpired during the war. At the same time the process suggests the women had a particular understanding of the deep harm caused by war. Somehow these women mobilised their imagination and had the courage to recognise their perpetrators as victims and as part of the community. Hair-cutting provided a way to recall, to remember past relationships, a physical reconnection to their children, their former lives and their ancestors. Symbolic of love and forgiveness, the act of cutting the hair went deeper than words. It touched a memory of life and relationship that seamlessly linked the past and present. In the case study of the tree of frustration, we see again the critical role of the local community. The 'cutting hair ritual' drew on the deep cultural traditions of the village and called the children to remember their life before the war.

The relationship built between the women and the former combatants also led to the transformation of traditional gender roles in the community. Research on the experience of women in and through periods of war suggests they face multiple levels and types of violence.⁹ In the upheaval that war brings, women often find more leadership roles. When men are gone, fighting, hiding or dead, the women become multifaceted leaders engaged in roles they traditionally may not have played. Ironically, as we have noted, a formal, high-level peace process and accord often entails the loss of voice and leadership for women as life returns to 'normalcy', translating too often into a return of patterns of male-dominated local and national leadership.¹⁰ The exclusion of women's voices and representation results in silencing of their unique approaches to peacebuilding. Without addressing the larger structural and systemic injustices, peacebuilding cannot be sustained. The complex reality of women's experiences in the midst and aftermath of war points to a third lens of peacebuilding: the lens of conflict analysis.

Lens 3: Conflict analysis

The lens of conflict analysis relates to how we envision and strategise a response to open conflicts. In settings of deep-rooted division, conflicts emerge at different levels. Most prominent in day-to-day life are the issues and flashpoints that emerge as disagreements over a visible problem. The flashpoint often explodes over the visible content of the conflict. Peacebuilding must develop a solution that resolves an immediate presenting issue and problem about which there is great division and even open hostility.

At a much deeper level, beyond the presenting problem, we find the relational context and structural patterns in which the day-to-day problems emerge. Social, economic, political and cultural structures organise our relationships. If some people live for long periods under structures that marginalise or exclude them, they face more than just the day-to-day problems. They also must change the way the structures are set up in order to create greater fairness, equity and justice. The women at the tree of frustration experienced a loss of voice in the aftermath of the war, as they were relegated to their traditional roles in the home. The leadership roles they had assumed during the war quickly disappeared as old patterns of exclusion and power returned that benefitted men. Interestingly, the relationships they built organically through their peacebuilding efforts eventually led to the transformation of traditional gender roles, as the former combatants demanded their participation in the political processes of the community. Through building relationships, they worked simultaneously to reintegrate the former combatants into the community, while also transforming larger systemic injustices. Peacebuilding must find ways to develop solutions that address immediate, presenting issues and problems, while simultaneously envisioning and developing change processes that address deeper structural injustices.

The *Liberian Women's Mass Action for Peace* provides another important example of how peacebuilding addresses immediate issues while simultaneously working to address structural and systemic injustices.

Case study 3: The Liberian women's mass action for peace

In the midst of the brutal civil war in Liberia, a few women began their own process of 'talk'. They had watched their brothers, husbands, sons and daughters killed and raped; innocent lives stolen for a senseless war. And so they began organising. They met in the fish markets and refugee camps. They met in homes and on street corners. The first meeting of four women soon grew to more than 500 and the Liberian Women's Mass Action for Peace was born.¹¹ They lined the streets of Monrovia in bright white t-shirts, demanding an end to war. They sat, day in and day out, through rain, blazing sun, wind – sometimes with bullets and air raids whirling around them, with only one simple message: 'We Want Peace, No More War'.¹²

As recognition for them grew, so too did their actions. They insisted on meeting with the then president, Charles Taylor. Finally, after weeks of protest, he agreed to see

them. The women lined the halls of parliament in their simple white t-shirts as Leymah Gbowee, one of the main organisers, presented their statement to the President. At first, Taylor refused to meet with the rebel factions. He ignored the women's plea for peace. But this did not stop the women. They went to the United States embassy and to the international press. The pressure mounted and the women did not stop until eventually the day came when Charles Taylor could no longer ignore the power of the women who gathered. He agreed to meet for peace talks with the rebel faction, Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD). So the women travelled, unarmed, to meet with the LURD warlords, delivering their message: 'The women of Liberia want peace now'. LURD agreed to meet for peace talks and arrangements were made for the top rebel leaders of LURD to meet with Charles Taylor and his administration for peace talks in Accra, Ghana.

Despite their leadership to promote the negotiations, the women found themselves excluded from the talks. They were not invited to the negotiation table. Their voices did not count. 'What could market mothers know of negotiation?' the men asked.

Once again, they began talking and gathering. They spread their message throughout the marketplaces: one mother to another. Their message soon reached women in Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Together, they raised money and travelled to Accra. A powerful coalition of more than 200 women gathered outside the building where the political leaders who had denied them voice, met.

While the women gathered outside the peace talks in Accra, the war in Liberia continued to spread. They received a devastating call that all-out war had erupted in Monrovia, the capital city. Charles Taylor fled the talks, hoping to save his own life, and the negotiations began to crumble. The women circled the building, linking arms, and refused to let the men out. They would not allow anyone to leave until the peace agreement had been signed. When the men sitting behind closed doors finally realised what was happening, an announcement came through the overhead speakers. When several of the leaders attempted to escape, Leymah Gbowee began stripping in front of the men – one of the greatest taboos in West African culture. Finally, the head mediator of the peace talks, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, the former head of state of Nigeria, turned to the men and said, 'I dare anyone to leave this hall until we have negotiated with these women'.¹³ And with that, the men went back to the negotiating table and began constructing the terms of agreement.

Two weeks later the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of Liberia and the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia was signed.

The signing of a peace accord never ends violence. The women had much work to do, particularly with the reintegration of child soldiers. Initially the United Nations (UN) excluded the women from the disarmament process. The child soldiers came, drugged and armed, and complete chaos ensued. Money for arms was not enough. Eventually, the UN turned to the women, who began their own approach to disarmament. 'We

offered a re-humanising approach', Leymah Gbowee explained. 'We engaged in real relationships with the child soldiers. We saw them not as perpetrators of violence, but as our *sons* and *daughters*.' They ate food together, laughed and cried together. 'We had to re-humanise them in their powerlessness. We had to take away not only their guns but also their vulnerability. We had to give them a new kind of power.' In the presence of their mothers, the children no longer found power in their guns, but in their relationships. 'We took away their fear and gave them a new kind of boldness through love.'

As the women became more involved in leading their villages towards reconciliation, they began to realise that sustainable change could only occur if their voices were represented in the political process as well. As Leymah Gbowee explained;

during the war, women could engage in peacebuilding because it did not interfere with the immediate social structures. But, when the war ended and communities started to come back together, women recognised that they could continue leading, but that is when the men tried to take away the voice of the women again. So the question then became, do we sit down again, or do we push this leadership so that it is sustained? (Gbowee, 2006)

The Liberian Women's Initiative decided that they could no longer sit down, and they began a grassroots campaign to register women to vote in the hope of electing the first woman president in Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. They travelled door to door, village to village, to meet and talk with women from all walks of life about the power of the voting process. Eventually, more than 7 000 women registered to vote and on 23 November 2005, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf became the first woman president of Liberia. The Liberian Women's Initiative, which had contributed enormously to community reconciliation, to the signing of the Liberian Peace Accords, had now also entered the political realm. The power they found, however, did not come from traditional notions of domination – but from a profound capacity to network; from the grassroots markets to the parliamentarians, women organised and transcended the barriers of class and political party to bring a new form of leadership to their country.

The *Liberian Women's Mass Action for Peace* demonstrates the three lenses discussed previously. They found power in the web of relationships they built, mobilising an effective vertical capacity that linked up a base of support among market women, connecting them with some of the most powerful political leaders in the country, including former President Charles Taylor and the top LURD commanders. They forged a strong horizontal capacity that spread across regions and social divisions, primarily through networks of women to build a base of support that could engage issues such as disarmament and the reintegration of child soldiers. Like the mothers at the tree of frustration, village women across Liberia chose a 're-humanising' approach to reintegration, calling to a past life in order to pave the way towards reconciliation, simultaneously evoking the past, present and future in their approach to peacebuilding.

Finally, their approach addressed not only the immediate crisis, but also worked to transform the wider structural, cultural and systemic injustices. In addition to these three lenses, the Liberian women also bring into focus the fourth and final lens of peacebuilding.

Lens 4: The stages of conflict

Conflict escalation passes through different stages as it rises toward open and sustained violence. An early stage involves latent conflict, where injustices, problems and tensions may exist between different groups, but the conflict has not expressed itself openly. At this stage the roles required of peacebuilding may be nonviolent advocacy, human rights education, the raising of awareness about the nature of what Johan Galtung has called structural violence. These roles are taken up in order to pursue needed change before violence can emerge.

The next stage is when people can no longer accept the injustices; they openly begin to agitate for change. Conflict then moves from a latent to an open expression of conflict.¹⁴ The roles of peacebuilding can include the development of nonviolent strategies for change, such as those taken up by Mahatma Gandhi or Martin Luther King, Jr. and the social movements they spawned. Violence prevention emerges as an important strategy; the confrontation may move toward dialogue, early action and quick response to create changes needed to move the conflict toward adequate solutions rather than see the escalation move to higher levels of sustained violence.

Once unleashed, violence is not easy to stop and follows patterns of sporadic explosions into fully sustained armed conflict over long periods of time. These often create repeated cycles of mutual recrimination, where many innocent communities and people suffer. At this stage the roles and activities of peacebuilding may include everything from humanitarian intervention on behalf of suffering populations to the hard work of conciliation, mediation and building openings for negotiations on ceasefires and peace agreements. If ceasefires and peace agreements are reached, a process of de-escalation may be initiated and sustained. Here the roles of peacebuilding can include the placement of international peacekeeping operations to sustain the peace and offer safety to the civilian population, the observations and implementation of the accords toward political transition and the processes of reconciliation among the divided groups.

The Liberian women employed a variety of peacebuilding efforts to address the problems at hand directly and effectively, while continuously working towards their desired future. When daily violence wreaked havoc in Liberia, they worked for a ceasefire, for a signed peace agreement. When the formal negotiations were reached, they began working towards healing and reconciliation in their communities. Today, though Liberia is experiencing relative peace, these women continue to work at a variety of levels – from the presidency to the marketplaces – to sustain peace and reconciliation in their communities.

Conclusion

Looking back across these lenses and approaches, several key lessons emerge:

Firstly, peacebuilding develops a comprehensive approach. Peacebuilding as a conceptual and practical framework is understood as involving a wide variety of roles, activities and perspectives. Comprehensive suggests the need to develop the lenses that envision the overall needs, actions, levels and design of building peace. A comprehensive approach steps back from the immediate situation and takes account of the wider set of initiatives and activities that are ongoing simultaneously within the setting. According to Lederach and Lederach,¹⁵ this often means that peacebuilding approaches are multidimensional and multidirectional. Building peace in the midst and aftermath of violence has significant nonlinear elements that address multiple aspects of challenges facing local communities, that are not easily understood exclusively by the sequential and linear views of negotiation and conflict resolution prevalent in much of the Western-based literature. Strategic peacebuilding moves beyond the visible aspects of any given activity and situates its design and action in terms of how immediate responses are linked with longer-term desired vision of change.

Secondly, peacebuilding operates with a clear sense of *interdependence*. Peacebuilding is a system made of interconnected people, roles and activities. No one person, activity, or level is capable of designing and achieving peace on its own. Strategic peacebuilding must include the participation of diverse voices to create a holistic process of change. Of particular note is the participation of women in both formal and community-based peacebuilding efforts, which provides a foundational building block for constructive change and sustainable peace in the midst and aftermath of war. Furthermore, we have seen that the most effective peacebuilding approaches are rooted in the cultural context. Strategic peacebuilding seeks to discover and strengthen the resources rooted in the context of the protracted conflict that do not rely exclusively on outside resources.

Finally, in the case studies in this chapter we note the more holistic vision of peace emergent in the African settings and worldview. The peacebuilding approaches used in our case studies had strong relational centres and from that focus an emphasis on wider participation, consultation and engagement. In particular we saw various ways in which this notion of comprehensive and interdependent action expressed itself through the elders in Somaliland who envisioned the need to engage local communities, requesting responsibility to face the local conflicts while building toward a large-scale, national conversation and negotiation. We also see this in the work of women in Liberia who, in response to local concerns for healing and re-integration of child soldiers, applied the same energy and concern for ending the national conflict, while simultaneously working on rebuilding and restoring relationships in the aftermath of war.

This holistic approach that understands that high-level negotiations must have an intimate connection to rebuilding relationships and healing has not always found robust expression in the Western approaches to conflict resolution that focus more narrowly on the deliberations of a few powerful and high-level political actors. Similarly,

the imaginative work of the mothers at the tree of frustration point to the importance of peacebuilding approaches that embrace multiple realities and aspects of time, that are oft-ignored in the more linear models of Western-based conflict resolution. The capacity of these women to call on the past memories of the former combatants in order to begin the journey towards healing, created not only a sustainable foundation for renewed relationships, but also addressed the multiple realities of violence within their community, particularly with regard to equal representation in their own local political processes.

From the *gacaca* courts in Rwanda to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa to grassroots peacebuilding efforts in Northern Uganda, the imaginative and abundant resources for peace in the African context have and continue to have a profound impact on both the practice and theory of peacebuilding worldwide. This chapter only skims the surface of community-based approaches to peacebuilding in Africa – approaches that we hope will continue to inform and transform the field of peacebuilding worldwide.

Public policy recommendations

Drawing on experience, relationships with our African counterparts and key peacebuilding frameworks, we recommend the following:

1. Project timelines for peacebuilding projects that reflect the long-term nature of peace work in places that have experienced protracted and devastating violence. Three-year project timelines *do not* provide an effective timeline for building and sustaining peace in regions emerging from protracted armed conflict.
2. The inclusion of women at all levels of peacebuilding projects, national and international negotiation processes.
3. Special attention and voice given to the local community and local leadership in designing and implementing peacebuilding projects.
4. Implementing national and international peace projects that highlight and honour distinct cultural practices and traditions of the communities they seek to serve.
5. Promoting and supporting peacebuilding projects that foster wide-reaching, unique partnership, which highlight the foundational need for strong networks in order to build sustainable peace (cooperative rather than competitive).

Notes and references

- 1 See also Philpot & Powers, Schirch, Assefa.
- 2 Farah, 1993; Lederach, 1997; Lewis, 1994; 1998; Samatar, 1982.
- 3 Lederach, J.P. & Lederach, A.J., 2010. *When blood and bones cry out: Journeys through the soundscape of healing and reconciliation*. Queensland: University of Queensland Press.

- 4 Lederach, J.P., 1997. *Building peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*. Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press.
- 5 Lederach, J.P., 2005. *The moral imagination: The art and soul of building peace*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Lederach & Lederach, 2010.
- 8 Gbowee, L., 2006. Personal interview, Harrisonburg, Virginia USA.
- 9 Fisas, V., 2008. *2008 peace process yearbook*. Barcelona: Editorial Icaria; Nordstrom, C., 1999. Visible wars and invisible girls, shadow industries, and the politics of not-knowing. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 1(1), pp. 14–33.
- 10 Meintjes, S., Turshen, M. & Pillay, A. (Eds), 2001. *The aftermath: Women in postconflict transformation*. London: Zed Books.
- 11 Saa, W., 2006. Personal interview, Accra, Ghana.
- 12 Lederach & Lederach, 2010.
- 13 *Pray the devil back to hell*, 2008. Dir. GiniReticker, Fork Films.
- 14 Curle, A., 1971. *Making peace*. London: Tavistock Publications Limited.
- 15 Lederach & Lederach, 2010.

4

Chapter

Healing and integrated development as part of peacebuilding in post-conflict areas: a social capital lens

Yvonne Sliep

Introduction

One of the biggest challenges we face in peacebuilding work is the great disparity between peacebuilding policies and the unchanged reality on the ground. Bringing top leadership together and using diplomatic approaches have a role but cannot be sustained in isolation. Experience from the field testifies that unless support for building trust is provided at grassroots level, recurring conflict is likely. Long after peace treaties have been negotiated, people on the ground remain stuck in deep levels of distrust, fragmentation and division, while suffering from physical, emotional and social wounds. Cultivated prejudice followed by extreme forms of violence cannot be erased only by a message from the top, but requires carefully considered peacebuilding strategies implemented over a long period of time on many levels. In practice this means incorporating not only the local leadership but also incorporating the views and experience of the local community. In addition to long-term goals, which are usually the interests of donors and international players, what people need in the short-term should be taken into consideration. For continued and sustained peace, greater synthesis is needed between international, national and local strategies.

What does it mean to take a community perspective in peacebuilding? Like any other intervention, change is best brought about through well-planned, theoretically informed interventions.¹ Ledwith² cautions us to be vigilant about only focussing on changes in the political context but to also improve at weaving theory into practice. This implies that we should be able to explain why we are doing what we are doing at any stage of the process, creating knowledge-in-action, which is based on practical experience. Instead of taking a wide-lens approach, which will be done by peace brokers on national and international level, a micro-perspective is added to deepen understanding and create realistic continuing peacebuilding initiatives. It is necessary to explore how people experience their everyday life in a post-conflict situation. The violation of trust results in changed relationships where suspicion becomes part of survival.

In the same way a top-down strategy will not work unless it reaches all levels of society and a bottom-up approach cannot be successful without the backing support of other levels. Bearing this in mind, the discussion in this chapter will move between the different levels, giving more detail to the community-based approach while

acknowledging the importance of national and international initiatives. A framework that has proven useful as a map, is social capital.

Social capital as the theoretical framework

Over the past decade the concept of social capital has gained great momentum in terms of its usefulness for social scientists as well as policy makers. In terms of peacebuilding it had particular relevance, as it addressed issues such as relationships, networks and trust.³ Social capital refers to all the knowledge and skills found in a group and all the links between individuals, families, friends and groups. The concept has been used to describe a number of phenomena pertaining to social relations at the individual and societal levels.⁴ Social capital has been thought of as a web of cooperative relationships between people that facilitates resolution of collective problems.⁵ Several scholars describe social capital in terms of resources that are embedded in and can be accessed through an individual's social network.⁶ Social capital has been conceptualised to include elements that influence social structure, such as level of trust, norms, reciprocity and solidarity that act as resources for collective action.⁷ Using the social capital framework enabled us to work with concepts such as trust, shared values and norms, social cohesion, participation in civic groups and networks (collective action), reciprocal support and positive identity.

A social capital framework looks at existing resources and how these can be strengthened. Social capital is not a magical solution and should be viewed critically. When is social capital used to exclude people from membership? How does the group or network contribute to the whole community and when does it exacerbate inequality?

We are interested in how social capital affects the community collective, but it is understood that there is also personal gain, which can be the attraction for individuals to participate in the collective. This is where elements such as trust and reciprocity (obligations and expectations – which can be applied for different means and purposes, not all for the greater good – sometimes referred to as antisocial capital) are important. This means that there is a potential for paradoxical use of social capital, to strengthen or destroy. Those working with frameworks of social capital tend to put the positive aspects of social capital in the limelight but the way ideas are expanding and being taken up on a policy and institutional level begs for caution and critical reflection.

Having pointed out some of the concerns, it is generally accepted that communities with higher social capital are healthier and better functioning than communities with low social capital. The elements and mechanisms described in social capital that are of particular importance in post-conflict situations include mutual trust, shared norms and values, cooperation with other groups in the local networks and links with decision-making government bodies. As long as it is applied mindfully, it is a useful framework to use in planning and evaluating interventions in complex situations such as post-conflict work.

The cost of war is high, both in financial terms and in the destruction of social networks and communities where fear and hatred are fostered. The link between social capital and peace manifests in the elements of social capital, such as inter-relational trust, memberships of formal and informal groups and networks and confidence in governance.⁸ Active participation and coordination on all levels are the main mechanisms of social capital to foster peace, although violence can also be perpetuated through the use of networks and group identity.

Attention is given specifically to the levels inherent in the social capital framework, namely social bonding, social bridging and social linking.⁹

Social bonding refers to the bonds between people who have more or less the same power, such as members of a family or ethnic group. The relationships help to manage everyday life. The ties are often strong. Understanding that the strength of communities depends on the strength of internal relationships, can be used as leverage to protect the vulnerable in communities. In the introductory chapter a description was given of *ubuntu* – a worldview known in most parts of Africa, ‘I am because you are.’ *Ubuntu* is the glue in social fabric; when the relationships within a community are shattered it has long-lasting devastating effects, as it attacks the very foundation of people’s lives.

A practical example of how social fabric is destroyed on a social bonding level is the following:

One of the horrors of the way war is currently waged is that it is played out on the body of women. The raping of women is not happening for sexual pleasure; it is done purposefully to break the spirit of people. Not only the body and spirit of the women are damaged, but the men and children also suffer directly or indirectly. It is not only the enemy from outside that does the raping. Relatives and neighbours can be forced at gunpoint to rape a person or witness the rape taking place. Young girls and old women and even men are included in the mass rape that takes place. Often the act of rape is not performed through sexual intercourse but by using sticks, guns or any other object to penetrate the vagina and anus of women. This violent act causes severe damage to the insides of a persons’ body, resulting in festering fistulas and wounds. Women who suffer from this kind of damage are often incontinent, meaning they cannot retain their urine or faeces anymore. It means that the women are wrapped in bad odours all the time and could also be infected with sexually transmitted diseases. The men to whom they are married are ashamed of what happened to the women and to be seen with them. There is also a belief that a woman who has been raped could bring bad luck into the household. To cause as much damage as possible, the acts of rape are performed in front of children and other household members. Men are also sodomised and this brings even greater shame, resulting in men being even more veiled by silence than women.

It is nearly impossible to imagine the kind of suffering these acts result in. The practice has also unfortunately had the effect it intended to have – damaging or breaking the

spirit of people and creating divisions within communities. The rape experienced is not mentioned, as it is a taboo subject to talk about and relationships continue to be affected negatively – the war continues in households and in communities in a different form, long after the rebels have left.

‘Bridging social capital’ integrates the levels and nature of contact and engagement between different social groups or communities, as well as linking diverse groups with varying levels of access to material and symbolic power. It brings people in contact with resources and benefits that are accrued from having a wide and varied range of social contacts. In dislocated communities there is generally little evidence of existing trust and support networks among different groups, and these would need to be actively facilitated.¹⁰ On a bridging level the ties are weaker but allow groups on a community level to access resources, for example between groups or locally established organisations.

Practical example of how leadership can strengthen or weaken social fabric, as provided by Centre Ubuntu:¹¹

Part of the strategy to strengthen social capital followed by Centre Ubuntu in Burundi was to explore the issue of participatory governance. On a visit to Butezi East, a typical problem concerning leadership became apparent during the discussions. Leadership currently is not one thing. There are different types of leadership operating at the same time: locally elected officials on the hills (from the democratic political parties), the local committees selected by the communities to do follow-up work on issues raised through facilitation of Centre Ubuntu and traditional chiefs/judges (Bashingantahe) carried over by inheritance. The three categories serve the same community, and each category regards his/her position as the most important for their community. Bashingantahe see themselves as coming from a long tradition that has wisdom and proven ability to solve conflicts and to keep values strong. They perceive the other two categories as young or inexperienced or as not having a traditional history with all its traditional symbols and rituals. Locally elected officials, on the contrary, see themselves as most important because they are directly elected by the people in official elections. Members of local committees of Ubuntu also see themselves as being elected by the people with the specific agenda to strengthen the community according to the shared vision created during the narrative theatre forums that are part of the strategy used by Centre Ubuntu. The group of elected officials and the group of local committees of Ubuntu tend to consolidate for the purpose of opposing the Bashingantahe. Persuading them to sit together, to get to know one another better and to review the roles and responsibilities of each group and their limitations has proven to be very helpful.

It is only by sitting together and negotiating the roles and responsibilities in any given situation that tension about this is relieved. In this particular community the outcome was very positive, but in many other communities it remains a challenge and source

of concern. Continued dialogue and exchange of information are necessary to develop a synergy of people who serve the same community, often with the help of outside facilitation.

It is in the stories that people tell that these abstract ideas come alive. It is logical, for instance, to say local leadership should be involved in peace activities, but in practice it is challenging.

In ‘linking social capital’ the power relations are vertical and manifest as government interventions or policy makers. On this level national security laws and protection of citizens are necessary for local participants to act.

Practical example:

On 18 September 2011¹² armed men broke into a bar in a tourist area of Gatumba, Burundi, about 15 kilometres west of the capital, Bujumbura, towards the border with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), killing 39 people on site, including a child of one year and four months old and his mother. Some of the men were in military uniform, armed with guns and grenades; they arrived at the bar, blocked the entrance, and fired indiscriminately at the crowd. Local sources told Human Rights Watch that, to their knowledge, most of the victims were not affiliated with any political party. However, a local resident said the bar-owner, who was reportedly among the victims, was a member of the ruling party.

A member of the local committee from Centre Ubuntu related how the local committee had been instrumental in calming and containing the local population. Because some of the attackers wore uniforms, it created great fear and many people fled from Gatumba. The attack had happened despite all political negotiations and agreements. The community had got to know the committee well and was working in a collective context. They were able to help the community deal with their fears and develop ways to stabilise the households while making use of the national response, including organisations such as Human Rights Watch, to stabilise the area.

It is difficult to establish peace on one level without incorporating other levels. For instance, the effectiveness of peacebuilding activities on a social bonding level can have limited effect if the networks on a social bridging level are actively destroyed or a peace agreement on the social linking levels has not yet been reached.

Based on experience in the field, a summary is tabled to reflect the actors involved on the different levels, the main challenges experienced and strategies promoted on each of the levels of social capital.

Social Capital Framework	Actors involved	Main challenges (which could overlap)	Particular application to promote peace from below
Social Bonding	Wider community Elected committees	Competition Burden Mistrust Lack of participation	Healing of relationships Enhancing tolerance and acceptance Rebuilding values in current context Recognising and decreasing destructive behaviour on individual, household and community level
Social Bridging	Informal groups Local CBOs Local NGOs	Collaboration and coordination Exclusion versus integration	Establishing conflict resolution and mediation skills and mechanisms Promoting participatory leadership and governance
Social Linking	Municipalities Local government and ministries External donors, researchers/ agencies	Reinforcements Synergy Accessibility Accountability	Aligning national top-down approaches with peace from below activities and strategies Caution of recolonising practices when making use of external role-players and resources.

Figure 4.1: Actors, challenges and application of peacebuilding

Narrative approach

What bring the ideas alive are the narratives that inform us of the experiences of people. In cultures where oral tradition is a primary mode of communication, narratives or story-telling are the main ways in which people pass on knowledge, history, values and moral beliefs. Stories do not simply tell us what is perceived to be reality, but more importantly, how people have understood these experiences. Therefore stories also help to create meaning. In Burundi, for example, in the complexity of its war history, there are as many stories and interpretations of the war as there are people.

In the context in which we are working, it is important to remember that the personal is the professional. It is helpful for psychosocial workers to look at their own lives and how these have been affected by war before rushing in to deal with the issues other people may experience. While meeting with the different organisations, it became evident that even professionals working towards healing and decreasing the effects of

the war had difficulty relating to one another if they came from different contexts. During the first workshop there was clearly tension among the people. The process of the work had to become a way of dealing with differences without that being the overall intention of the workshop. In the days together we took part in many activities to increase our own social fabric – a lot of it happened through the weaving of stories.

An example would be that during the introduction people told us the story of their name, which allowed the human behind the worker to become visible in a historical context:

Abangala Wilondja. First name means – the one who is ready to offer help to anybody. I inherited this name from my grandfather who remained single for a long time – so he was free to move to various places and to offer his help to any people in any place. This made him get many friends and he could eat in many places. In our culture celibacy is not a good thing at all – but for him it worked. Even I can now say I have many friends at a grassroots level. The combination of two names Willy and Ilondja means my father was a unique son. The war changed this but we are going to change things back to the way they were before. I want to honour his name and my name.

By the end of the week people had joined voices and started speaking in externalising language to close the gap between them:

We envisage that the regular contact, exposure and communication will help to decrease the fear and suspicion that has developed amongst the regions we live in as war has torn us apart.

Gatherings were often under trees, sometimes in the rain hiding under banana leaves, but were usually accompanied by humour, song and excitement about putting heads together to look at emerging problems that could have been totally overwhelming. The histories behind these problems are harsh, difficult to listen to and it is impossible to imagine the real experience.

... I am different now through these activities. I was not open to people – only a few friends. Now I am more open and trusting, more tolerant and neutral. I can also listen to people's stories in a different way. I did not like people to talk about sex in front of me like when my sister told me she had been raped in front of others. I did not want to hear it and kept silent and walked away. Now I know that is not the right way. My sister and I have become very close and I have also been able to help her ...

After a number of these sessions I found a big change in myself. Normally when there was a misunderstanding my nature would be that I would be very angry and refuse to say anything. But now even if I still get angry and resentful about something I can continue to work with a person without my anger getting in the way. We can also talk about these issues.

I always try to imagine my inner feelings and I use this approach to look at possible causes and solutions by exploring effects. It is as if I am playing narrative theatre within myself and it helps to behave in ways I like better ...

... I have seen in the work we have the same problems as the communities we work with. What happens in them also happens in you and in your own family life. By helping the community we are actually helping ourselves as well ...

Facilitation like this has become a kind of moral teaching for myself. I had inner problems myself but now through the training I can understand myself much better. I also talk about these things with other women now and we help each other.

Narrative theatre in practice¹³

There are different methodologies that can be used to render the stories of people visible. Narrative theatre is one methodology that has been used very successfully in Burundi and the DRC to bring people together despite high levels of mistrust. The audience, which includes members from all sections of society, is used to reunite people and foster an understanding that the people are not the problem; the problem is the problem. In this case the effect of the war on everyone is mapped, but a preferred way of living in the future is also shared. It also creates the opportunity for people to re-author their stories and to develop a shared vision for the future of their community. It views problems as separate from people, and assumes people have many skills, competencies, beliefs, values, commitments and abilities that will assist them to reduce the influence of stress and trauma in their lives. The narrative theatre approach applied in this context is therefore much more than an enacted drama watched by participants to raise awareness. It is actual life experience performed by members of the community with the purpose of taking agency to re-authoring their lives based on a desired future perspective.

In the context of trauma and war, there is a wide range of painful incidents that have had an impact on community life. It is not only the stories that describe suffering (*problem-based stories*) that are of interest; stories that reveal people's courage, abilities and strengths (*strength-based stories*) are also used to rebuild peace and strengthen social capital. Sustained stress and anxiety undermine agency and destroy collective and self-confidence. Therefore, by revisiting strength-based stories, people begin to remember their capacities and competence, which also helps to create hope and the possibility for peace-building. This is especially valuable when people have a shared story of having historically lived together peacefully and having dealt with problems as a community, such as drought. Bringing a community together to share their stories also creates a platform to rebuild what was destroyed, or lost, as a result of violent conflict. In this instance the term strength-based also refers to community resilience that embraces the capacity to respond to healing and peacebuilding.

In a community context entry into the work starts with understanding how people experience their everyday life at the time of the intervention.¹⁴ How did relationships change during the time of conflict? Which new patterns of behaviour are people concerned about? Developing critical understanding of the meaning of events can only happen through dialogue. An example will be where an escalation of domestic violence, which is common in post-conflict zones, demonstrates that the war from outside has now moved into the home space.

Within their group or community, people can collectively decide to work with one story that encapsulates the actual life experience of one person or family. This should be a story with which the people in the gathering can strongly identify. The story is then acted out to a live audience by members of the audience, who instead of being spectators become spect-actors. A very useful aspect of working with narrative theatre is that problems can also be turned into characters of the play. It is not possible to cover the detail of how this is done in this chapter, but it is described in the narrative theatre training manual referred to earlier. The idea is to create a reflective distance between the problems and people to enhance awareness and problem-solving. It makes it possible for people to unite against the problem; if, for instance, **'Aggression'** is identified as a problem in the community, then **'Aggression'** is 'externalised', or placed in the limelight for the community to explore. When is **'Aggression'** around? What does **'Aggression'** do to families and communities? How does **'Alcohol'** and **'Aggression'** together become stronger? How can one notice that **'Aggression'** has come to the party? What does **'Aggression'** do when people start accusing each other? What would **'Aggression'** say about power or the abuse of power?

Once the effects of doing things in a certain way has been clearly demonstrated, a plan of action has to be developed that will consider a preferred way of doing things. In order to make sure that everyone's voice is included, discussions can be held in small groups to talk about what people find important in life and how something like **'Aggression'** can threaten these hopes. It is advisable to use small groups of the same gender and age span, as this facilitates more equal contributions. Summaries of the small group discussions are then taken back to the main forum to be integrated with the feedback of all the other groups.

Sharing stories is only a first step. Making use of narrative theatre to dramatise the story creates experiential spaces where people are given the opportunity to experience bodily what it is like to stand in the shoes of another. The methodology focuses on the here and now. A platform is created to enact problem stories and to reconstruct preferred stories. This is where community resilience comes into play. Community resilience can be described as the ability of community members to take meaningful, deliberate, collective action to remedy the impact of a problem, including the ability to interpret the environment, intervene and move on.¹⁵

In areas of armed conflict, such as Burundi, it is important to understand how communities cope with their current problems, and how they have coped with past

events. It is especially important to encourage people in affected communities to consider the effects of the war, so that they can understand their own responses and those of others better to initiate the desired changes. These effects may include destructive behaviour, loss of values, ongoing violence, a limited capacity for conflict resolution and the continuing suffering of community members as a result of the psychological consequences of traumatic experiences. Each of these can provide not only challenges, but also opportunities for conflict transformation, healing and peacebuilding.

Rebuilding trust and solidarity within groups and networks forms a strong basis of strengthening social fabric through a social capital framework. It can take on different forms. In Burundi the issue that drew people together was the use of narrative theatre. The way in which narrative theatre spread was mostly word of mouth. Neighbouring villages saw that something different was happening and asked Centre Ubuntu to come and do the same at their place. The follow-up radio interviews that were conducted after a narrative theatre forum created the opportunity for many to hear firsthand how perceptions and attitudes had changed in response to the dialogue that had taken place in a facilitated safe space. People phoned in and requested similar sessions. The narrative theatre helped get people together and to name problems that had adverse effects on everyone, but the real follow-up work depended on the committees that were elected after the narrative theatre session had taken place.

As the demand for narrative theatre grew, a proposal was written to train more psychosocial workers. By bringing the psychosocial workers of very different areas together, commonly experienced challenges and success stories could be shared. These gatherings were identified as an important space for reflecting and learning that needed to have a formal format to ensure sustainability. A framework was drawn up to illustrate the link between healing, peacebuilding and integrated development from a grassroots perspective. In order to render visibility to the voice of community, each section (A-E) has been explained in notes at the end of the chapter.¹⁶

A visual diagram like this helps us to gain a clearer understanding of cause, effect and possible strategy. For the people on the ground these are artificial separations. It comes together in the story that is told by someone or a group of people: What the causes of the war were, what the effects of the ongoing violence have been, what people had before and desire to have again. It is the story that people tell that becomes our entry point for any relationship-building.

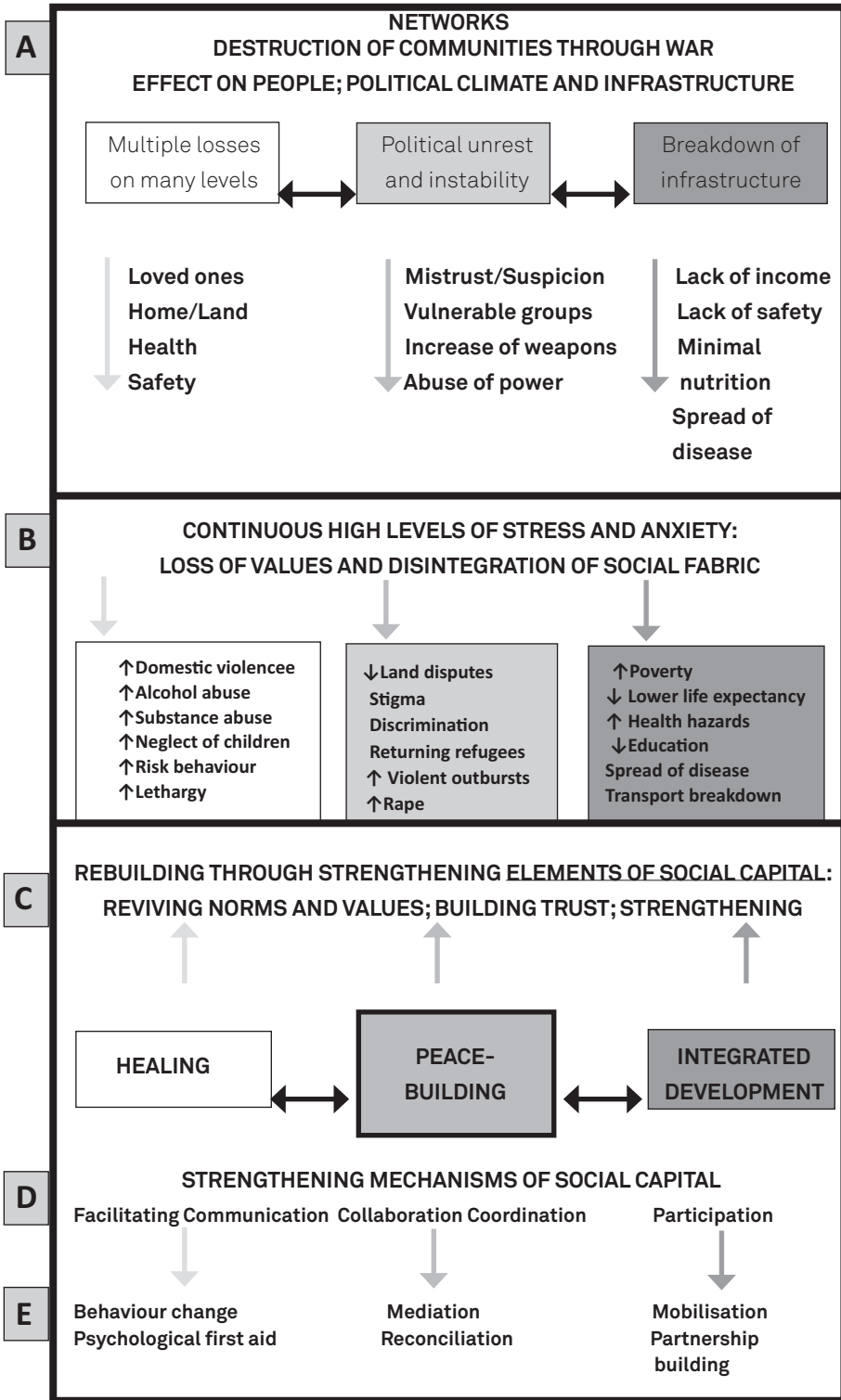


Figure 4.2: Holistic approach to peacebuilding¹⁷

Discussion

In 2012, Burundi emerged from a 12-year, ethnic-based civil war. Years of Hutu-Tutsi violence led to more than 300 000 people, mostly civilians, being killed. Thousands of people fled to Tanzania and have been repatriating (returning to Burundi) since 2009. Burundi is now trying to rebuild society, but faces huge challenges of reviving a shattered economy, forging national unity and integrating displaced people and returnees. Political stability and the end of the civil war are still fragile.

Centre Ubuntu is a non-profit organisation that became active at the beginning of 2002 and is based in Bujumbura. It draws its name from the word ‘ubuntu’, which refers to human values, the specificity of personality. ‘Ubuntu’ is a common word in the language areas from Eastern Africa and the Great Lakes to Southern Africa, where *ubuntu* means ‘being through relationship, I am because you are’. In Burundi, *ubuntu* also refers to the synthesis of all the values that people who live an ethical life stand for.

Centre Ubuntu started using narrative theatre as a strategy to promote peace-building and collective healing in 2005. The main focus of the work was to revive a value system as basis through relational dialogue. What started as a small organisation, where eight people were trained, has now been adopted by an *Ubuntu* network. It consists of 13 organisations that serve 227 communities. In each of these communities, committees have been elected locally to work with identified problems and tensions alongside the traditional and elected leadership. Each committee consists of five to 12 members representing all the ethnic groups and is gender-sensitive. The network has been active since 2010.

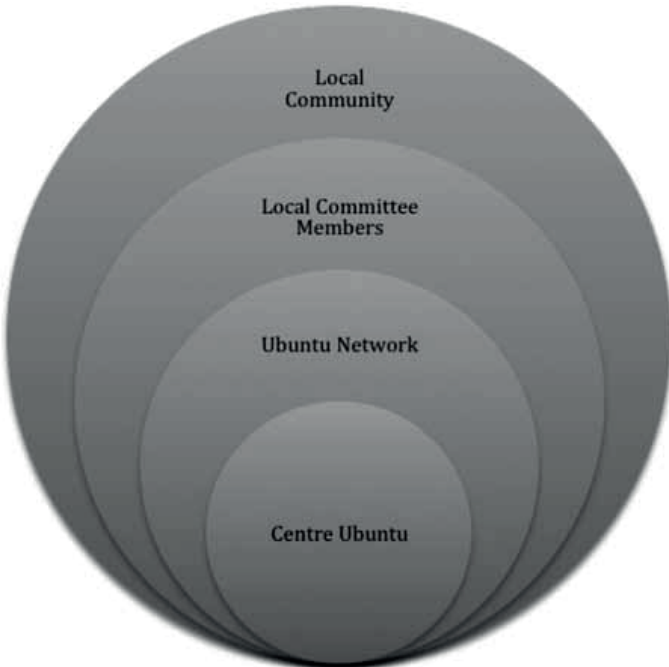


Figure 4.3: A Nested Model of Building Peace from Within

The result was an official network where members resolved to meet at least twice a year. It was during the network meetings that it was identified that few psychosocial workers knew what was happening in the follow-up phase after the narrative theatre sessions in the communities in which they were active. They were mostly doing the narrative theatre in their spare time, as they were employed in other capacities as well, for example teachers or prison wardens. This was very different from the mother organisation, Centre Ubuntu, whose core business was healing and peacebuilding.

During one of the network meetings when we talked about how we would know whether the work is having any real impact, the members themselves identified that we would only know if the voice of the committees was brought into the network meetings. As it would be impossible to bring more than a thousand committee members together, better follow-up strategies had to be developed. It meant the role of the overseeing psychosocial workers was to bring the voice of the committee workers into the network meetings. It required better follow-up with committees in the field, for example asking them what they wanted the network people to know about how the follow-up work was going, which problems and successes they were experiencing, and what information they needed in order to fulfil the task that both the communities and the psychosocial workers required from them. In the following network meeting, the psychosocial workers gave comprehensive feedback. The first thing that became clear was that the task given had in itself already created better support to the committees and the psychosocial workers gained deeper insight into the whole process of not viewing narrative theatre as an event but as part of a process. The feedback of the psychosocial workers was clustered and from there the five main themes emerged. The themes were referred to as the five pillars that would strengthen the work and make the results more visible and measurable. The main areas or themes included revival of the values within the community to create a platform for all other actions, creating possibilities of different forms of leadership to work together, intervening early in low-level conflict to prevent violent outbursts, applying psychosocial first aid and referring cases that need follow-up, integrating vulnerable members into existing income-generating groups or other resources provided by non-governmental organisations, using the concept of integrated development.

For this plan to be carried out, the following was necessary:

- The committees had to be equipped with some basic knowledge and skills in each of these areas. This resulted in the need to develop a training manual that could serve as a guideline. As the topics had emerged from the work itself, it was decided to enhance the capacity of the trainers to develop their own materials, as the training was seen as a dynamic model that would be adjusted over time according to the needs of the community. It proved to be a very intensive process and not all trainers were able to participate. There was also unspoken competition between the members, each wanting to write the best chapter, which resulted in less mutual support than anticipated.

- For the committees to be able to do referral both for psychosocial issues and bridging to other resources in the community, they needed a clear referral map of their area. That included personally visiting the different levels of referral, to enable them to explain to clients clearly what they could expect in the place of referral, including the cost of local transport and how long it would take to get there. By visiting the centres themselves they would become more knowledgeable about the overall psychosocial services. Many committees had not yet drawn up the resource map, which also depended on how active the psychosocial workers in that area were. In this case the network meetings made it possible to create better visibility and accountability around action in the field.
- The committee members would need to understand what could happen in each of the five pillars. During one of the network meetings the spider web diagram was developed, creating the possibility to plot on each of the pillars where the community was and what the next level of support would be. Examples of each of the pillars have been included in the endnotes.
- Values and identified behaviour problems¹⁸
- Trauma and healing¹⁹
- Conflict mediation²⁰
- Leadership and governance²¹
- Integrated development²²

The exercise resulted in a tool that could be used for evaluation and planning, but was developed by the network members under facilitation of the expert consultant, creating better ownership of the tool. It is a phase that still needs to be followed through in practice with most communities, although a number of committees are currently actively using the spider web and the resource map. Presenting the results of the spider web exercise highlighted with practical examples which pillars were the most developed in which area. It also gave an opportunity to illustrate with practical examples where changes were taking place in different communities. Equally important is that it showed where no progress was taking place and enabled collective brainstorming on how this could be changed.

There are other ways in which social capital in general and specifically networking can be stimulated. In South Kivu in the DRC there is currently a multitude of responses to psychosocial problems that are supported by external actors. Every small community-based organisation and non-profit organisation has a slightly different focus, but currently there is a lack of coordination and collaboration between them. Well-functioning coordination of activities is one of the most important mechanisms to lubricate social capital. It is a challenge, though. There is lack of capacity, both human and financial, to ensure sustainable action. There is competition for funding among the local organisations and groups. Coordination on this level is best locally owned, but

needs both international funding and ring-fenced funding from government. It is an illustration that a separation of social and economic capital is not possible, although the different lenses are useful to strategise.

The idea is not only that particular planned actions are followed through, but that the knowledge and skills can also be applied more widely and dynamically and with critical reflection. As discussed earlier in the chapter, critical thinking is embedded in the applied strategy. For this to happen there has to be a nuanced understanding of the operations of power and the ability to respond to these appropriately, re-alignment of values with ethical behaviour to develop a moral compass, negotiating responsibility and accountability to rest with the overall community instead of only individuals in positions of leadership and power, and finally the ability to track how ideas, plans and intentions translate into everyday practice and how one knows if this is happening.^{23 24}

To recover from war, collective resilience is necessary. Communities must reduce risk and strengthen the most vulnerable groups, in this case the women and children. Men, who generally oversee the peace negotiations, often forget the importance of addressing these vulnerable groups. Following through with integral development projects that involve the local people, while establishing strong networks and communication structures, increases the possibility of sustainable peace initiatives.

Evaluation strategies

In a climate where suspicion, anxiety and resistance are already a problem, it becomes really challenging to do evaluation, especially participatory evaluation that includes community members. This is in addition to general concerns about the power donors have in terms of funding and other ways in which evaluation results may be used. One way to reduce tension in the area of evaluation is to perform it in as participatory a manner as possible from the onset.

Definitions of success by different stakeholders may differ and it is therefore important to understand the goals of individual stakeholders and their views on the best ways to achieve these goals.²⁵

As with all programme evaluation, it works best if it is incorporated from the onset into proposal and implementation. Regular formative evaluation can strongly contribute to the summative value and impact of evaluation. When using social capital as a theory, there are a number of ways in which the evaluation can be done.

Basic social capital can be measured with existing scales before and after the interventions as a quantitative measurement, but narrative theatre itself can be used to collect and analyse data. In this case the overall story is taken into consideration, but an additional unit of analysis is the utterances people make and gender, age and cultural factors. In addition, tools such as the spider web, discussed earlier in the chapter, can be used.

Documentation could also be kept on the actual activities conducted by the committees. Examples of this are the number of narrative theatre sessions, the

problems identified and any follow-up or referral that happens afterwards. Another useful evaluation tool has been working with stories of the most significant change people experienced over a period of time. In addition, consideration can be given to how well communities are now able to deal with internal conflict and contain and resolve emerging problems, as well as general expression concerning issues of safety, decision-making and dispute mechanisms that have been put in place and whether the consequences highlighted in the situation analysis have been addressed.

During planning and implementation the use of a framework based on theory adds clarity to the direction and overview of the work. It further helps with conceptualising evaluation during the planning but also while reflecting on the work as it unfolds, sometimes in unexpected directions.

A dialogue has to be created with practitioners that introduces meaning to using theory to inform practice. It is one of the challenges when approaching peacebuilding from a community-based approach. One deals with overburdened practitioners for whom time is essential. In my experience the best results are obtained when capacity-building time is planned for during the span of the project. The chosen framework, in this case working from a social capital perspective, is continuously revisited and deepened; it becomes informed by knowledge from the field. Not only the partners in the workshop are in dialogue with one another; dialogue is also created with the theory as a partner. It is in this space the framework develops meaning over time. As the language is used on a regular basis, it becomes more familiar. In the end it remains essential to keep the reflective space for the dialogue to continue, for instance through bi-annual workshops where some formative evaluation is done and short-term plans are adjusted. The use of expert consultants, who are able to navigate this space in a way that stimulates dialogue and meaning based on the framework, can elevate the quality and extent of the implementation over time. The importance of this is often overlooked and seen as creating dependence on donors and outsiders. Quite the opposite is true. It is unrealistic to expect organisations to develop sophisticated plans with a few weeks of training only.

Conclusion

In this chapter, an argument has been presented to pay closer attention to healing and integral development as part of community-based peacebuilding. There is a greater chance for this strategy to be successful in a post-conflict situation where there is a reduction of violence and people are more likely to be able to take control of their lives.

Peacebuilding is about relationships. Understanding that our ideas and reality are negotiated through dialogue, also with theory, will enhance openness. If there is any chance of persuading already overburdened practitioners to consider the usefulness of theory, it has to be based on strong logic and rationale. There are no shortcuts in this; investment must be made to create the possibility of dialogue on ground level, dialogue that involves as many voices as possible and is taken seriously by other stakeholders,

dialogue embedded in respect and followed through with visible accountability.

Social capital is proposed as framework that can eventually bring greater synergy to top-down and bottom-up approaches, as the point of entry can be anywhere in the framework. The strategy uses the stories of problems experienced by people in the community as an entry point rather than highlighting the drivers of the conflict, although these are not ignored.²⁶

Whatever lens is used to understand dynamics and elements on different levels will also lead to the possibility of creating better-tailored evaluation strategies that will be discussed later on in the chapter. The focus here is on exploring how social capital can contribute to peacebuilding.

In the words of Wittgenstein:²⁷ ‘in the end it is about going on together’.

Policy recommendations

- Review possibilities to integrate peacebuilding, healing and integrated development in specified geographical areas. Develop ways of working, as doing that addresses the needs of people more holistically.
- Make use of existing resources, but invest in capacity building.
- Revise the role of reviving values in communities to create a better foundation and sustainability.
- Incorporate a strength-based approach, which renews energy and hope.
- Obtain participation of all levels of society, as this increases the likelihood of successful peace-building on ground level.
- One size does not fit all; listen to the stories people on the ground tell you.
- Invest in long-term capacity-building, preferably with a consistent expert consultant who will be able to scaffold learning over a longer time.

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- 17 Explanation of figure 2:

A: It is not possible to measure the effects of war on a region accurately. What we can say is that the losses are on multiple levels. Deaths are counted, outbursts of violence and aggression are noted, and even from the outside general suffering is witnessed. But what are the stories of the communities who live in the aftermath of war? What would be seen and heard if deeper losses are rendered visible and silenced voices heard? On an individual and household level people are strongly affected by death or injury of household members and loss of shelter. Within the community there will be raised levels of suspicion and fear while there is an increase of circulating weapons and greater possibility of the abuse of power.

B: The world is much more aware of the initial losses than of the devastating effects on an individual, household and community level in the aftermath of war. Post-conflict, continued raised levels of stress result in changed coping mechanisms. Values deteriorate and an increase in problems such as aggressive outbursts, domestic violence, substance abuse, neglect of children and general lethargy becomes visible. On a community level there is discrimination against women who have been raped or children born as a result of rape. In the bigger context poverty increases, as well as health hazards and risky behaviour, resulting in a further breakdown of social fabric.

C: From a community perspective entry to peace can only be through dialogue. The stories of

people have to be heard and acknowledged. The dialogue needs to be facilitated by creating a safe space involving different forms of local leadership. It should be viewed as a process and not an event. The process includes practical peacebuilding strategies, creating possibilities of healing and strengthening integrated development for vulnerable groups.

D: Strengthening of relationships and networks does not need to develop only on an individual and household level, but also needs to develop between groups, organisations and networks, to enhance a better collective response. Effective multi-sectoral partnerships are also important to enhance coordination, strengthen networks and emphasise integration. Too often small programmes compete against one another for resources and visibility. Clear communication lines and a united goal can be facilitated, resulting in a strengthening of social capital mechanisms.

E: Strategies such as narrative theatre can be used to revive social values while decreasing destructive behaviour in relation to problems the community itself identifies. In addition, training on methods of responding to low-level conflict and clarification of mediation structures will contribute to community-based peacebuilding while active partnership-building will strengthen social capital.

18 **Topic values vs problem behaviour:**

1. No activity
2. Identify people who display disruptive behaviour such as substance abuse. Sensitise people about the specific problem. Does the committee have a clear understanding as an outcome of the narrative theatre? Has the committee gained greater insight into the problem behaviours in their community and what the vision is that this community has for itself? People discuss what kind of community they want in future. For example, if they want relationships to be legitimised through marriage, how can this be facilitated, e.g. by reducing the price to be paid for the bride?
3. After the narrative theatre session, the committee members identify places and people where problematic behaviour is taking place. Either an intervention is taking place in that local area or following up through home visits is done with people who have been identified as having problems. The committee members identify the interventions generated by the community during the narrative theatre. This helps the community to translate the identified solutions into action.
4. The problems are being dealt with according to the level of priority identified by the community. The result should be a decrease in problematic behaviour and a deeper understanding of how to respond to other problems in the community.
5. Evidence of an increase in mutual respect is found in the way people relate to one another; testimonies can be given by community members. The people are now living the vision they generated during their narrative theatre session at the onset of the work.

19 **Topic: Trauma/healing**

1. No activity
2. Identify people in the community who may be suffering from symptoms due to trauma.

Create a supportive environment in the community (through discussions and possibly narrative theatre).

3. Have updated maps of all the possible psychosocial referral places and persons. The names and contact details of referral people should be included in this document, as well as what people can expect to receive at this service and how long it will take them to travel to this service.
4. Create an environment where people do not discriminate against people who show symptoms of trauma or other mental illness, but rather provide care and support. Committee workers are doing follow-up visits to the homes of people where someone requires support.
5. Actively manage people who show evidence of symptoms and refer cases too difficult to manage on community level.

20 **Topic: Conflict resolution and mediation**

1. No activity
2. Committee members have discussed with the leaders and reached agreement on what kind of conflicts committee members can resolve and who they will refer people to if the conflict is too serious or community members are not satisfied with the outcome.
3. The leaders have shared with the broader community what the role of the elected committee members is in relation to conflict management. People are approaching committee members concerning local issues of conflict.
4. Small conflicts have been resolved or bigger conflicts have been referred to another level for conflict resolution.
5. Some individuals or groups have decided to reconcile their differences and share how they have managed to this with the overall community and encourage others to do the same. Regular meetings are held (at least once a month) with the representatives to review the status of existing conflicts and to determine whether they are aware of any new conflicts in the community.

21 **Topic: Leadership**

1. No activity
2. Local elected committee members and wise men in the community (in Kirundi *Abashingantahe*) and locally elected leaders sit down together to get to know one another.
3. Each group shares with the others what and how they can contribute to leading the community to become stronger. They draw up a joint programme of activities.
4. Committee members participate in these meeting and present their point of view. They also present the issues of vulnerable and marginalised people in the community.
5. Members of vulnerable and marginalised groups are invited to some meetings and asked for their contribution.

22 **Topic: Development**

1. No activity
2. Community members sit down to discuss the importance of strengthening vulnerable and

marginalised people, as well as identify who these are in their community.

They also sit together with representatives and make an assessment of the strengths and resources in their community.

3. Decisions are made regarding the project and the beneficiaries.
 4. They put into practice the identified project and meet regularly to see how things are progressing.
 5. Commence setting up more small committees to help with the attainment of outcomes.
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Does restorative justice work? an evaluation of the restorative justice programmes of Phoenix Zululand¹

Geoff Harris

Introduction

This chapter reports an evaluation of the restorative justice work of Phoenix Zululand (PZ), a non-governmental organisation with Quaker roots, which has operated in the 11 prisons of Zululand, northern KwaZulu-Natal, since 2005.²

The justice system worldwide largely works on a retributive foundation. An offender who is alleged to have committed a crime against a victim (typically another individual) is prosecuted by the state and, if found guilty, is subject to punishment. Two points should be noted about retributive justice: the victim is largely excluded from the process and there is an assumption that the punishment – which may involve imprisonment – will help the offender to reform.

South Africa's criminal justice system stands firmly within the retributive tradition, notwithstanding the strong emphasis of the *White Paper on Corrections in South Africa* (2005), which recommended a change in the basic role of the Department of Correctional Services from incarceration to rehabilitation. South Africa has very high rates of incarceration (around 400 per 100 000 people), a prison population of around 200 000 and there is severe overcrowding of the country's 240 prisons.³ The proportion of the Department's annual budget allocated to rehabilitation in 2011/12 was 5.5 per cent, compared with 54.8 per cent on incarceration and 26.8 per cent on administration⁴ and the proportion for rehabilitation is not projected to increase up to 2014/15.

In contrast with retributive justice, restorative justice focuses on building a sense of self-worth and personal responsibility among offenders, and often involves efforts to build or rebuild the relationship between offenders and their victims. This may occur through mediation sessions where stories can be told and heard, apologies made and forgiveness asked for and given. Restorative justice can occur within an essentially retributive justice framework, perhaps for certain types of crimes, and allows for sentencing options other than imprisonment e.g., mandatory participation in a victim-offender mediation process. It has often been argued that many of the methods used by African communities to deal with anti-social behaviours involve strong elements of restorative justice. Individuals are asked to take responsibility for their behaviour (e.g. by apologising and possibly making reparations) and the community is asked to forgive and accept the offender.⁵

The top-down nature of retributive justice is obvious and, to the extent that the motivation and organisation for restorative justice comes from the justice system, this is also true for restorative justice. The programmes evaluated here – the restorative justice of PZ – however operate from outside the justice system and can be legitimately regarded as a bottom-up approach. The objective of all PZ work is the restoration of self-worth and dignity among prisoners and the restoration of relationships between prisoners and their families. The specific programmes evaluated are the main PZ activities – *Starting with Us*, *Conversations in Families* and *Family Conferencing* – although it also engages in a range of other initiatives that have a rehabilitative if not restorative objective.

Starting with Us involves group discussions and self-disclosure by prisoners on issues concerning personal responsibility and personal growth and is run by a peer facilitator, i.e. a former prisoner employed by PZ. Towards the end of their sentences, prisoners who have completed *Starting with Us* may participate in *Conversations in Families*, i.e. groups that deal with issues relating to family life and responsibility, including conflict resolution and fatherhood. *Family conferences* are subsequently arranged between groups of prisoners and their families in the last few months before a prisoner's release, with the aim of dealing with the anger and estrangement that dominate these relationships. Towards the last part of 2010, when the fieldwork component of the research was carried out, *family conferences* were occurring at a rate of almost one per week and typically involved eight prisoners together with around 30 family members. All participation by prisoners in PZ programmes is voluntary, but it should be noted that reports on individuals by PZ facilitators are commonly used by the parole board in deciding whether or not to grant parole. This clearly provides a motivation for at least some prisoners to participate.

A non-technical discussion of the main tenets of restorative justice is in order, drawing on the references in endnote 4. The message of much retributive justice to prisoners is that they are bad and always will be. Prisoners deserve to be treated harshly by society because they need to pay the price for what they have done and also because this will act as a deterrent – to the individual concerned and to others – to such behaviour. Underneath is an understanding that they cannot reform and cannot recover from what they have done because, deep down, they are bad. Once an offender has been sentenced by a court, prison officers take over as society's agents of retribution and frequently use their power over prisoners to humiliate them on a day-to-day basis. On their release, ex-prisoners are likely to suffer further rejection from their families and communities and so naturally gravitate towards other ex-prisoners and criminal activities.

To those committed to restorative justice, such an approach is counter-productive and in fact promotes the bad behaviour it aims to deter. Restorative justice has a higher view of human nature. It separates a person's actions from his/her essential goodness and emphasises that a person can turn away from bad behaviour. It therefore sees the responsibility of the criminal justice system as being to safeguard those in its care and aiding their integration back into society. The restorative justice approach emphasises

that an important reason for high rates of crime is the loss of the link between punishment and public shaming, a link which is often still strong in rural African communities. Punishment as provided by the criminal justice and prison systems reinforces a sense of badness and provides very little reason for behavioural change.⁶

Public shaming, on the other hand, makes it clear to an offender that certain behaviour is unacceptable to the community and that remorse, apology, reparation and commitment to change his/her behaviour are required. Once these occur, the matter has been dealt with and there is no reason to revisit it. What is needed, therefore, is not to stigmatise or find ways of shaming offenders, not to send them on a long-term guilt trip or to punish them permanently, but to rehabilitate them in a way that aids their reintegration into the community.

The *family conferences* of PZ broadly follow this pattern. To begin with, prisoners relate the story of the criminal incident for which they were convicted; they are prepared for this by their involvement in *Starting with Us and Conversations in Families*, where self-disclosure by participants is encouraged. Then the family members tell the prisoners how the incident and its consequences have affected their lives. Through this, prisoners experience shame and remorse. The process then moves on in ways that are uplifting to the prisoner. It is emphasised that it is the behaviour of the prisoner that is shameful and not the prisoner himself. The prisoner is then given an opportunity that is not available in the retributive justice system – to do something to repair the damage his behaviour has caused by apologising to his family, asking for their forgiveness and committing himself to changing his way of life. He thus distances himself from the behaviour which led to his imprisonment – while still accepting responsibility for it – and emphasises the fact that, in essence, he is a good person. His family then has the opportunity to forgive him. Indeed, as we shall see, there is frequently recognition of failure on the part of families and apologies and requests for forgiveness from families to their imprisoned family member. In the opinion of the PZ facilitators, the transformative and re-integrative purposes of *Family Conferences* seem to be achieved for the vast majority of prisoners and their families and the mood towards the end of these three-hour events is celebratory.

Research design and data-collection methods

On the face of it, the impact of PZ programmes may seem easy to evaluate in quantitative terms: that is, the South African rate for recidivism within, say, five years of being released could be compared with the rate for those prisoners who have been through PZ programmes. However, in addition to the problem of self-selection discussed below, there are major shortcomings with respect to data. There are no national data on rates of recidivism and neither the Department of Correctional Services nor the National Prosecuting Authority has data that would allow these rates to be calculated with any precision; it is certain, however, that they are very high and national estimates 75 and

90 per cent are generally accepted. PZ has limited contact details for its participants once they are released, partly owing to frequent changes in cell phone numbers and also to the practice of name changes on the part of re-offenders in the hope of receiving lesser sentences. The principal aim of PZ's restorative justice work, it should be noted, is to build self-worth and personal responsibility among offenders and to enhance their relationships with their families. Indirectly, this can be expected to reduce recidivism, but such an outcome cannot be measured in the present study.

Evaluations of a project or programme can take one or both of two forms; they may focus on how well the process (e.g., the training) was carried out or they may focus on the impact of the training (e.g., on the attitudes and/or behaviour of the participants).

The most powerful way of measuring impact is to have an experimental group (to which the training, for example, is given) and a control group who do not receive the training but who are otherwise similar. If the attitudes and/or behaviour of the experimental group after the training are significantly different from that of the control group, then this is taken to represent the impact made by the training. A classic example of this kind of study is that of James Gilligan, who was able to train prisoners in one block of a San Franciscan prison in violence prevention and compare the number of violent incidents in that block, before and after the training, with those of a similar block in the same prison, which did not receive the training. Violent incidents in the experimental block fell from 38 to one in the year following the training, while those in the control block remained at 36 incidents. There were also strong indications that the benefits of the training continued when the prisoners were released and resulted in significant reductions in reoffending.⁷ Despite the methodological strength of this type of study, practical and ethical considerations frequently mean that it often cannot be carried out. It may not be possible or equitable to select only a sample of those in a school or prison and provide training to them but not to others, simply for the purposes of research.

Therefore, an alternative method – measuring participants' attitudes or behaviour before and after the training – is commonly used. There are two main concerns about this approach: One is that other factors may operate during the course of the training, which could result in attitude/behaviour change, rather than simply the training. The longer the training period, the more serious this problem will be. The second is that unless the participants are chosen in some random way, there is likely to be a problem with self-selection, for example, those who volunteer for the training may already be predisposed towards the changes the training aims to produce. The personalities and motivations of the volunteers may be more important in bringing about change than the training itself.

It is very difficult to receive permission to carry out research in South African prisons and, in any case, the impact in which we are interested is on prisoners after they are released. The composition of the sample of ex-prisoners who took part in the evaluation was dominated by practical considerations. Ex-prisoners are spread across

Zululand – mostly in rural communities – and elsewhere in South Africa. While PZ has the names of most of the prisoners who have been through its programmes, accurate phone and other contact details for them are very limited.

The sample can be regarded as a convenience sample and the fieldworker took advantage of times when ex-prisoners travelled in from rural areas for parole-related meetings with the Department of Correctional Services at various centres in Zululand. While this is in no sense a random sample, there is no reason to suspect that those interviewed are not typical of prisoners who participated in PZ programmes and who have been released within the last two to three years.

A qualitative research design was chosen, given the importance of securing in-depth information concerning attitudes and behaviour. Focus groups of up to eight ex-prisoners were used and were followed up by individual interviews with some of the focus group participants. The particular benefit of focus groups derives from the interaction, discussion and debate they allow among the participants. It is thus a more natural environment than an interview in that participants are influencing others and being influenced by them – just as they are in real life. The moderator plays a low-key role and asks a limited number of questions at appropriate times. The individual interviews allowed some of the issues from the focus groups to be explored with individuals. Only ex-prisoners were able to participate and, given the overwhelming proportion of male prisoners in the Zululand prisons, only males were included. All focus groups and interviews took place in *isiZulu*. With the permission of the participants, these were recorded, then transcribed and subsequently translated into English. All participants signed informed consent forms before having the nature and purposes of the research explained by the fieldworker. A total of 35 ex-prisoners who had participated in one or more PZ programmes participated in four focus groups. Of these, a further 23 took part in individual interviews. In addition, 16 ex-prisoners who had not been involved in PZ programmes participated in two separate focus groups. Data from the families of ex-prisoners (33 in total) were collected by a mixture of group and individual interviews, depending on the availability of individuals.⁸

Responses from ex-prisoners

Starting With Us and Conversations in Families

‘... these programmes had an utmost impact on my life’

Two main questions were asked of the ex-prisoners:

- What are the main things you remember about *Starting with Us* and *Conversations in Families*?
- Which of these made the biggest impact on you?

Overall, there was a very strong appreciation of the role played by the *Starting with Us* programme in the lives of these ex-offenders. They regarded the impact this programme had on their lives as being tremendously positive, both while in prison and after their release. Many respondents emphasised one or more of the following four themes:

- Controlling their anger and dealing with conflicts well when they occur
- Taking responsibility for their behaviour
- Self-confidence and an enhanced willingness to speak
- Linkage to the respectful behaviour they had learned from their families and communities but had abandoned.

Some representative quotes from the interviews are listed below.

... there are so many things I learnt you know. For an example here, I learnt that if I have a problem with someone how I must approach the person ... you see. I learn about this thing what is it ... assertiveness and dignity oh and also ... if you have a problem with a person I must talk nice and not fight, make him/her understand that he wronged me you know, yes ... eish it's a lot. And it helped me because eish I never used to tolerate shit you know.

... I am a quiet person you know. I used to talk less when I am with people. Now ... I can say that these programmes helped me to boost my self-confidence. In fact what I learnt is that if there is fault I talk about it then and there before it grows and spreads into hatred.

... you see I am a kind of person that does not like fighting who comes from a family with respect, you see. I can say ... that Phoenix revived that which I was taught by my parents. My father was a man of respect, you see. So now here at Phoenix in this programme they taught me about respect [and] being responsible for the things I have done in the community.

I think it is where we learnt about owning up for the truth, realising our mistakes, love, honesty, handling any life-related situations. I used to have a problem with my family but after doing conflict management I realised my mistakes. Now I get along so well with my sister and everyone else.

I had lost much opportunity in learning to be a father to my children ... Conversations in Families gave me such good ways of thinking and I am doing this work [of fathering] well.

Family conferences

'I felt a luggage being removed from my shoulders'

The same two general questions were asked concerning *family conferences*. The responses clearly show that participants highly appreciated these events. For some, it was the first

time they had met with their families after being sentenced, and some did not expect their families to attend; indeed, in some cases they did not, to the huge disappointment of the prisoner concerned.

Respondents often said that this was the first time that they had been able to explain to their families what they had done. Explaining to the entire room what they had done, as well as asking for forgiveness in a public space, was a huge step for them but one for which they felt that their involvement with PZ had prepared them. A number spoke of the relief it gave them. Making promises to their families about future behaviour was important to both parties as a demonstration of their commitment to a changed way of life.

Some representative quotes from the interviews are presented below:

... I was very happy to see my family ... respecting my wish [to attend the Family Conference] even though I had wronged them ... I got an opportunity to explain to my family exactly what happened because in actual fact my family is the victim in this case. I asked for forgiveness and they forgave me. Well, it was a very difficult day of my life because I didn't know whether they were going to forgive me or not ... I can say thank you very much Phoenix, Father Richard, and Father Vilakazi who are the fathers that played a crucial role in bringing my family. Indeed, when I begin to think about this, I feel the tears but tears of joy...

My brother could not even look me in the eye. I even remember him saying that if I commit another crime, they won't give me support. That alone said a lot to me. They [had previously] refused to forgive me as they were still angry because my mother kept on crying endlessly. You know ... I had ... created enemies for them in the community [because of the crime I committed] and my family had to move from home because of me. It was not until Phoenix intervened that they forgave me.

After explaining to my family about the case I was charged for, I felt a luggage being removed from my shoulders.

Responses from the families of ex-prisoners

Family conferences

'... the most joyous moment of my life'

It was clear from the group discussions with families of ex-prisoners that they had suffered much as a result of the imprisonment of their family members. Sometimes, indeed, the crime had been committed directly against a family member. Whether or not this was the case, they were typically bewildered about what had actually happened (the facts of the case), and felt deep shame and sometimes estrangement from the community. There was also frequently economic hardship in the form of lost income when their family member was imprisoned and he was not able to contribute

to demanding household tasks, including parenting. As a consequence, there was considerable anger against him and little perceived opportunity to express this, given that transport costs put visits to prisoners beyond the reach of most families. But along with this anger, they typically grieved for their lost son (references to the prodigal son of the New Testament were common) and yearned for reconciliation with him.

An important aspect of family conferences, which did not emerge in the discussions with families, was added by Phoenix staff members who ran the *Family Conferences*. This was an acceptance by a number of families that they bore some of the responsibility for the actions of their family member, and it was necessary for them to apologise to him. This often related to their criticism and lack of support, which encouraged him into friendships and behaviour that resulted in prison.

There was benefit in realising that they were not alone: *‘Meeting here as families made me feel relaxed seeing that I am not the only one who has been through this; there are a lot of us.’*

The invitation to attend the family conference was ‘a dream come true’ for many families in that it allowed them to realise that their family member was alive. For many families, he had disappeared into prison, and they had given up hope of seeing him again. Indeed, several families initially interpreted the invitation to attend a family conference as meaning that their son had died:

... it was a difficult day because we did not get the message so well. We thought that he was dead, and we were supposed to come and fetch his body. I then phoned my brother and asked him to accompany me to fetch his remains as it is our culture to collect a soul using a traditional leaf called umlahlankosi. I rejoiced when I heard that my son is in fact alive.

Many families reported that it was at the family conference that they learned the truth about their family member’s crime for the first time.

In most families, there was considerable anger with the prisoner. Several families reported that having a family member in prison was the most traumatic experience they had faced. Nonetheless, most families really wanted to forgive and reconcile with their family member in prison and were hugely grateful for the opportunity the family conferences provided for this reconciliation. In the words of one mother:

I felt very disappointed when they told me this boy had committed crime. My heart was very painful such that I decided to take him out of my heart. I told myself that he is like a dead son to me. But when I got to the prison after getting the invitation from Phoenix, I felt my soul filled with happiness. I know that my son learnt some lessons from being here with you ... please do not give up on collecting our lost sheep.

Many families reported dramatic changes in the attitude and behaviour of their family member on his release, the most commonly mentioned being giving up alcohol. ‘I am so grateful to Phoenix because he came back with so many improvements, like not drinking.’

Discussion and conclusion

Evaluations of this type aim to measure the difference which a programme has made and which would not have occurred otherwise. This is a difficult task, because we can never be really sure of the likely outcome in different circumstances – in this case, what might have happened in the absence of PZ programmes. The use of a control group (of prisoners with similar characteristics but who did not go through PZ programmes) with whom to compare PZ participants would be almost impossible to achieve for ethical reasons, that is, the difficulty of taking, say, 100 volunteers and then refusing to offer programmes to half of them for experimental purposes. Another issue is selection bias: that is, the prisoners who volunteered for PZ programmes may have already been inclined – because of their personalities and/or their prison experience – to change their behaviour. If so, PZ's impact may have been limited to facilitating the putting of this inclination into action.

Reading the words of the ex-prisoners in the interview transcripts, however, does not support a limited view of the impact of PZ programmes. They are very clear in suggesting a strong link between the principles espoused in *Starting with Us* (e.g., taking responsibility for your actions, dealing with your conflicts non-violently) and their willingness to change. This is in addition to building self-worth and interpersonal skills. Ex-prisoners consistently attributed the motivation to change, as well as the ability, to *Starting with Us*. There is no obvious reason why their views should not be taken as very largely correct.

The opinions of the ex-prisoners' families provide an important corroboration of the prisoners' opinions from the other side of the wall. They frequently reported positive changes in attitude and behaviour, and they regarded the opportunity to participate in family conferences with their 'lost sheep' as bordering on the miraculous.

That said, ex-prisoners face a very difficult social and economic environment when released. Many of the ex-prisoners still have issues with their families – after all, forgiveness and reconciliation is a process rather than an event – and their communities.⁹ However, as noted, the apologies during family conferences are frequently two-way, and both the family and the ex-prisoner have reasons to work at building a new life. This is hugely difficult. They live in an extremely violent country and the rural areas of South Africa in particular face deep poverty. Most households only cope as a result of social grants. Clearly, the temptation to engage in crime as a way of accumulating assets and in violence as a response to conflict is very strong.¹⁰ The stigma of having a prison record is considerable and strongly limits opportunities to find employment in an already extremely difficult economic environment.

The data collected during this evaluation do not allow predictions about the possible effect of PZ on recidivism, but they do suggest that ex-prisoners who have gone through a PZ programme are less likely to re-offend. Personal growth and development are reasons, but the more important one seems to be the reconciliation with families and a commitment to them to begin a new life.

Policy recommendations

Restorative justice principles can be applied to many activities, ranging from the way in which children are brought up in households and the way institutions operate (as in this chapter) to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's attempt to deal with South Africa's apartheid past. Whatever their scope, however, all restorative justice efforts have good relationships between individuals and groups as a central theme.

This chapter reported a case study and the only way its findings could be legitimately applied to wider society is if they were consistent with those of other evaluations. To date, there are simply too few evaluations of restorative justice efforts in South Africa to reach conclusions concerning its impact. It is also somewhat illogical to think in terms of policy implications from bottom-up initiatives. Almost by definition, bottom-up initiatives happen independently of, and often in spite of, policymakers and the paradigms that underpin their actions.

That said, it is clear that South Africa's criminal justice system is overwhelmed by the current levels of crime and recidivism. To paraphrase Albert Einstein, we cannot expect to solve these problems using the current (retributive) methods, even if they were greatly scaled up; we have to find a new paradigm. I believe that restorative justice provides that paradigm and will help build the more peaceful society South Africans want. In particular, I make two suggestions for the consideration of the Department of Correctional Services. Firstly, given that prison officers are society's representatives as regards the day-to-day treatment of prisoners, they could be trained to help them understand and practise the principles of restorative justice. Given the longstanding entrenchment of the retributive paradigm, this training will need to be intensive and ongoing. It could be carried out by non-governmental organisations such as Phoenix Zululand, which have demonstrated their commitment to restorative justice. Secondly, given the very limited capacity of the Department as regards the rehabilitation of prisoners, this work could be taken over by non-governmental organisations such as Phoenix Zululand, focussing on restorative justice activities of the type outlined above.

Notes and references

- 1 This chapter is an expanded version of an unpublished paper by the author - *Does restorative justice work? An evaluation of the programmes of Phoenix Zululand*, Paper submitted to the Board of Phoenix Zululand, August 2011. See www.phoenix-zululand.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2012/01Phoenix-evaluation-report.pdf
- 2 Phoenix is the name of the bird in Egyptian mythology that burns itself on a funeral pyre but then rises from the ashes to a renewed life. A similar story can be found in many cultures.
- 3 International Centre for Prison Studies, 2009. *World prison population list*, 6th edition. London: King's College, University of London.
- 4 Department of Correctional Services. *Annual performance plan 2012/13*. Pretoria: Department of Correctional Services.

- 5 Basic books on restorative justice include Zehr, H., 2002. *The little book of restorative justice*. Intercourse: Good Books and Newell, T., 2007. *Forgiving justice: A Quaker vision for criminal justice*. London: Quaker Books.
A major collection of research articles on restorative justice is to be found in Strang, H. & Braithwaite, J. (Eds), 2001. *Restorative justice and civil society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Among more recent collections of readings and standard texts are Johnstone, G., 2011. *Restorative justice: Ideas, values and debates*. London: Routledge and Johnstone, G., 2011. *Handbook of restorative justice*. London: Routledge.
- 6 I will not discuss here the common assertion that prisons in fact act as a school for criminal behaviour. The 'education' prisoners receive in prison, which may encourage them in the direction of crime when they are released, is a result of many retributive aspects of the prison system.
- 7 Gilligan, J., 2001. *Preventing violence*. London: Thames & Hudson, pp. 127-128.
- 8 The data collection was carried out by Ms Sthandiwe Mthuli, then a postgraduate student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, with the assistance of PZ staff.
- 9 We did not collect any data on how communities acted towards ex-prisoners on their release.
- 10 The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) has undertaken a major research project on the causes of violence in South Africa. Among the outputs are CSVR, 2008. *Adding insult to injury. How exclusion and inequality drive South Africa's problem of violence*. Johannesburg: CSVR and CSVR, 2009. *Why does South Africa have such high rates of violent crime?* Johannesburg: CSVR.

Reintegration of child soldiers: a case of Southern Sudan

Pamela Machakanja

Introduction

The phenomenon of child soldiers has become a global concern to all because of the devastating effects it has on affected children, families robbed of their children and societies that lose the next generation of future leaders. Although the issue of children involved in adult wars is more widely discussed at the international level in the context of children's rights than before, countries that are directly involved in the actual recruitment of young children continue to deny that this issue is a problem. Worldwide international human rights groups and child rights organisations estimate that over 300 000 children under the age of 18 have been forcibly recruited into military activities of warlords and rebel commanders. In spite of the fact that the United Nations (UN) has instituted international conventions and treaties which many of its members have signed, it is estimated that over 50 countries worldwide continue to recruit under-age children into their military forces or use them intentionally as child soldiers. While the reasons for the children's involvement as child soldiers are varied, abject poverty and governments' abrogation of their social responsibilities to safeguard the human security of their people, especially children, remain the major cause.

Countries that are classified as weak and that have fragile governance institutions succumb more easily to being motivated to engage in the exploitation of their people, especially women and children, as they fail to ensure the efficient delivery of essential services to these groups of vulnerable people. The inability of most governments, especially in Africa, to recognise youth meaningfully as a critical constituency and an asset in the socio-economic development of their countries is also seen as one of the major causes of instability and insecurity. Lack of employment opportunities, limited access to education and having no visionary mentorship in life may lead many youth to engage in violent behaviour in response to frustration. This situation of neglect results in loss of human dignity, trust and respect for self and others because of the violation of children's rights and the experiences of abduction and exploitation that the children go through will force them to offer loyalty to militias.

Efforts to address the phenomenon of child soldiers have historically been made through the application of universal instruments and institutions with a focus on disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration. While these global efforts have been successful to some extent, they also pose serious challenges to many governments

involved in these hideous acts. Using the newly created nation state of South Sudan as a case study, this chapter examines the phenomenon of why and how children are motivated to engage in violent wars. Without minimising the efforts of many stakeholders to eliminate child soldiers, this chapter advocates comprehensive community-based approaches inclusive of peace education as a holistic approach to the socio-economic reintegration of child soldiers and the prevention of youth from further forceful re-engagement in violent atrocities. The strategy for a multi-sectoral community-based and rights-based education for peace would have a strong and practical focus aimed at stimulating empathy, cooperation and reconciliation and be embedded in community processes for dealing with conflict in non-violent ways. The central argument is the need to respond to the complex issue of child soldiers with new visionary strategies within broad contexts embedded in prevention, psychosocial support, education, justice and peace. This holistic approach makes it imperative to understand child soldiers as a heterogeneous group with varying experiences differentiated by gender, age, position, values, needs and vulnerability.

Context

South Sudan as a new state is made up of 10 states and 79 counties. Its population is estimated at over eight million, with more than 60 ethnic tribes that are constantly fighting one another over land, pastures and cattle rustling. It is a land-locked country bordering Uganda to the south and Kenya to the south-east, Ethiopia in the east, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Central African Republic to the south-west and Sudan to the north. In terms of security, Chad, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan remain insecure because of the continued existence of fighting rebel militia groups, a situation that poses a security threat to South Sudan. This insecurity creates an environment that provides opportunities for the peace spoilers to exploit children through rampant abduction and forced recruitment into militia armies. The insecurity and instability have forced the country to remain under-developed, with high levels of illiteracy despite the abundance of oil fields and natural resources. The continued warfare between Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile has exacerbated the recruitment of child soldiers in support of their rebels.

Within the 10 states of South Sudan, the Upper Nile State, Unity and Jonglei States form the Greater Upper Nile region of Southern Sudan, an area that is constantly hit by insecurity due to activity by rebel groups. This insecurity is compounded by the significant number of Southern Sudanese returning from Northern Sudan. In addition, disputed border areas with Jonglei State include Piji, Atar and Khor Futus. Thus, with its fair share of both territorial border and internal conflicts, South Sudan is one of the poorest countries, with possibly the worst health and sanitation situation in the world. South Sudan became an independent state on 9 July 2011, thereby becoming a UN member state on 14 July 2011 and a member of the African Union on 28 July 2011.¹



Figure 6.1: Map of South Sudan

Source: <http://www.africamaps.com>

Evolution of the child soldier phenomenon: a global overview

The issue of child soldiers remains of global concern, partly because of the complex nature of today's civil wars, which have changed from being inter-state to being protracted intra-state conflicts. This complexity is compounded by the widespread perception that the international community is not paying much attention to this issue, despite the grievous consequences of death and disabilities among the affected children, other vulnerable groups and society at large. Currently, there seem to be no peace treaty that comprehensively sanctions the recruitment of children into adult-instigated wars.²

Forced recruitment

Historically, the forced recruitment of children has resulted in these children participating in violent wars, serving as communication collaborators, spies and carriers of stolen booty for the rebel fighters. This phenomenon is exacerbated by the advancement in technological weaponry, which allows easy proliferation of small arms among vulnerable groups such as children. This exposure facilitates the exploitation of children in war-affected communities, as they are separated from their families into the wilderness of warfare. Although the phenomenon of child soldiers seems to affect boys more than girls, in the current climate of sexually exploitative intra-state conflicts, girls of a very young age are succumbing more often to the vulnerabilities of exploitation

and abduction. Evidence shows that between 1990 and the present time girls have been present in armed forces in 55 countries worldwide, and in 38 of these cases were involved in direct conflicts .³

Moral interest

The history of the child soldier in South Sudan can be traced back to the early 1950s when Anyanya 1 revolted against the British-Egyptian decision to make South Sudan part of Sudan. When Khartoum disowned the Addis Ababa Peace Agreement in 1982, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) immediately resumed the struggle in 1983.⁴ The phenomenon of child soldiers originated as an ideology driven by the communist concept of the Red Army. Around 1988 to 1989, the late Dr John Garang, the former leader of the SPLA, came up with a plan of child soldiers, meaning Red Army. Children, mainly boys below the age of 15, were recruited through community chiefs and area commanders. The SPLA movement was based in the Ethiopian region of Gambella in an area called Itang. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds were initiated into collective recruitment, living together, singing war songs and participating in simulated military marches as a way of boosting their morale. This raised the children's hopes and morale in believing that they would secure a brighter future through education, health care and a better life, as they enjoyed food stolen on raids. However, as soon as the children reached the age of 15 they were drafted into the SPLA forces, where living conditions were deplorable. Despite the depressive conditions, children emulated their great leader, John Garang, and continued to disappear from home because of poverty, in search of the newly acclaimed heroism. Being a child soldier became synonymous with symbols of power, heroism and loyalty towards the movement's goals and being in possession of a machine-gun gave them a false sense of security.

Voluntarism

One of the most alarming trends relating to children and armed conflicts is their voluntary participation as active soldiers. Debate on the reasons that force children to join rebel groups continues, as many refute the argument that children can join the rebel movements voluntarily. In the case of South Sudan, the discourse of children volunteering to be part of the fighting armies remains contested for various reasons. Most of the children can be described as voluntary recruits because of the limited options they had in life, where conditions included abject poverty in many families in war-ravaged societies. The effect of most conflicts in Africa on the family as the social fabric of society is usually huge, as the family is the first institution to be disintegrated and fragmented, deepening the levels of poverty, with serious consequences for children. Many children are then left with no option but to join armed rebel groups voluntarily, as the children are taken as booty by the rebels. They voluntarily make themselves available as a means of survival, especially when both parents are killed in

war or whole communities are burnt out during raids. In other situations children join armed groups because that is the only access to food, freedom and care, despite the fact that all their hopes for a brighter future will be fruitless, as they eventually endure the brutality of war, exploitation, abuse and dehumanisation. In such circumstances children as young as six become targets because of their vulnerability and lack of power to defend themselves from the vices of war and rebel commanders.

Children can be coerced by being promised that they will be protected and will be taken to safer places where their security and basic needs will be guaranteed and that they will be sent to school and live a better life. At times families accept surrendering their children to the powerful and uncompromising rebel leaders in the belief that their children will be safe, without realising the manipulation and exploitation that await them. Once they are out of sight in horrid rebel camps, the vulnerable children are initiated into a life of drugs and all forms of direct violence as a way of strengthening their attitude and brutally penetrating and exploiting their minds, turning them into killing machines. Research evidence has also shown that children who are most likely to become child soldiers are usually recruited from very disadvantaged and marginalised backgrounds where survival is always a challenge (Machel, 1996:34). Because of this vulnerability, families and children succumb to the unguaranteed promises of a brighter and better future. Analysis of this situation reveals the need to question the simplistic notion that children as young as six or eight are capable of volunteering to join the rebel group without taking into account the prevailing circumstances of the children's life experiences and the nature and complexity of the war situation.

In war-torn contexts, such as South Sudan, recognition has to be given to the fact that when children join a military or militia group, it provides an opportunity for us to make detailed analyses of their limited options for survival; they might see joining the rebel movement as the only viable option for survival and having a sense of belonging. In South Sudan evidence shows that children would appear to have volunteered because initially after recruitment they are given lighter chores of cooking, fetching water, washing clothes and collecting firewood until they are of age and are put in the battle frontline where the only rule of the game is to kill. Such exploitation and abuse challenge the extent of the mandate of global society in protecting the rights of children. Thus, if the government institutions that are supposed to protect children through enforcement of rules and laws are weak, this leads to the violation of children's rights.

As one child testified;

I joined the SPLA when I was 13. I am from Bahr Al Ghazal. They demobilised me in 2001 and took me to Rumbek, but I was given no demobilisation documents. Now, I am stuck here because my family was killed in a government attack and because the SPLA would re-recruit me. At times I wonder why I am not going back to SPLA, half of my friends have and they seem to be better off than me.' (Boy interviewed by Coalition [now Child Soldiers International] staff, Southern Sudan, February 2004).

In another case story, one child cited in Machel (1996:123) narrated his ordeal as one of South Sudan's 'lost boys';

We were guided by a few militias, the rebels – there were not many though. We were carrying our food and it [was] finished, and we had nothing. Death by disease became a haunting reality. The children started dying everywhere. You wake up in the morning and you find maybe three around you are dead. On the road I was struck by a mysterious illness. We got a sickness that makes you so sick you cannot move. You cannot walk; you cannot move your arms. There is a certain way of death that makes you feel very sorry. It happened to one of my cousins. And when he died, he just died, crouched on the ground until you pushed him down. I don't like his death.

Analysis shows that to gain a deeper understanding of the gravity and scale of the phenomenon of child soldiers it is imperative that analysis recognises the volatile and rapidly changing nature of protracted armed conflicts. Research evidence also shows that 90 per cent of casualties of modern warfare are women and children who bear the brunt of human rights violations characterised by abusive rape, abduction and forced recruitment.⁵ This is made worse in contexts characterised by weak, fragile and/or collapsed governance and leadership pillars. This implies that a combination of large-scale and small-scale strategies is required to address this pandemic.

Re-conceptualising the notion of child soldiers

The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) defines a 'child soldier' as

any child – boy or girl – under the age of 18 years of age, who is part of any of regular or irregular armed force or armed group in any capacity, including, but not limited to cooks, porters, messengers, spies, and anyone accompanying such groups other than family members.'

Honwana⁶ characterises the relationship between the 'child' and 'soldier' as dialogical because the power relations between the child and the soldier are best described as asymmetrical. Because of these power differences, the soldier-child relationship is further characterised by lack of trust, suspicion and all kinds of risks and vulnerabilities to the child. For example, the sexual exploitation of girls as rebel wives not only destroys their identities, but also creates serious difficulties in how we conceptualise the normal growth and development of children into adulthood. Today, the proliferation of small arms, the brutal and protracted nature of most civil wars and the effects on children challenge us to reconsider our understanding of the concept of child soldiers in ways that go beyond the mere physical abuse to the deeper notions of psychological and moral destruction of the affected children's identities and personalities. With reference to South Sudan, because of the chaotic and brutal nature of the conflict, the notion of child soldiers did not receive immediate attention, as the international community concentrated its attention on the scramble for the oil resource as the major factor in the matrix of the war.

Despite the universally accepted UN definition of the notion of child soldier, the term continues to carry diverse meanings and interpretations with regard to whether reference should be made to those children who were used to carry weapons for the rebels as opposed to those who actually used the weapons to commit atrocities. There are concerns that the psychological and emotional consequences of involving children in adult wars have not been given sufficient attention. For example, in South Sudan, these concerns have pushed the new government to enact a comprehensive programme of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration with the aim of coming to terms with the traumatic past. A rational understanding of the nature and impact of child soldiers either as active perpetrators or victims becomes imperative to address the issues in comprehensive reconciliatory ways that guarantee durable peace.

Major actors in child soldier recruitment and deployment in South Sudan

The complex and protracted nature of the war in South Sudan has given rise to a multiplicity of actors involved or implicated in the recruitment of child soldiers. While the ushering in of peace and stability in the war-torn societies of Angola, Sierra Leone and Liberia and the completion of the reintegration programmes in these countries have brought hope for the eradication of the child soldier phenomenon, the reintegration of child soldiers in South Sudan remains tenuous for a number of reasons. Firstly, the nature and form of child soldiers in South Sudan are different from the other characterisations of child soldiers in that there are many fighting political faction groups, including the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF); the SPLA and other informal groups or militias competing in the recruitment of young children into their armies for diverse instrumental reasons and interests. This phenomenon continued unabated despite the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), because of the frustration and disgruntlements over the outcome of the 2010 elections and the resistance of the Khartoum government to give full autonomy and self-rule to the South. The continued resistance of the Khartoum government meant that it continued to exploit the situation through the recruitment of child soldiers, whom it used to destabilise and frustrate the ambitions of the South. Thus, the continued recruitment of children by the SAF remained a serious problem. This situation was compounded by the fact that most of the vulnerable children had lost both parents and relatives during the long and protracted war and were left with no option but to join either the rebel groups or the government forces, despite being under age to engage in military duties.

Although the new government of South Sudan is in place, it remains weak and fragile because of a number of factors, which include continued strained relations between the North and the South over the ownership and sharing of the oil resources, tensions and ethnic conflicts among the communities of South Sudan's 10 states, lack of trained and professional human resources to develop relevant policies and the fragmented security sector that struggles to enforce the rule of law and observation of

human rights. All these issues have a negative impact on the security and stability needed to implement a comprehensive reintegration programme effectively and efficiently.

Sudan armed forces

The involvement of the SAF in the recruitment of children was carried out against the background that many young men of Arab descent in Sudan did not want to join the military. As a result the Sudanese government mobilised to recruit and abduct male youths forcibly from the South and other parts of the neighbouring countries of Ethiopia, Chad and the Darfur region. The main reason was to boost its military forces. However, according to a UN report the SAF has vehemently denied engaging in the forced recruitment of children. Nevertheless, from May to August 2006 an estimated 19 000 child soldier recruits under the age of 18 were said to have been infiltrated into the main SAF army and militia rebel groups in Darfur.⁷

Sudan's People's Liberation Army

The SPLA acknowledged that it had child soldiers in its ranks and made high-level commitments to end their recruitment and use. However, 47 children were reported in the Kilo 7 barracks in Bentiu, Unity State in July 2006, and they were not released until July 2007. Some of the children as young as nine years old had been enticed by SPLA junior soldiers who had promised education in Southern Sudan. SPLA forces raided a school in Nasir, Upper Nile in October 2006 and abducted 32 boys for the purpose of recruitment. In September 2007, the UN confirmed the presence of children associated with SPLA forces in Southern Sudan.

Militias and armed groups associated with the SPLA

Recruitment of children by militias and armed groups associated with the SPLA is alleged to have been carried out by commanders through village chiefs and elders. The militia commanders would demand that the chiefs and elders identify specific numbers of young boys in their communities. Those who defied these orders were either tortured or killed in front of their children and other members of the family as punishment and as a deterrent for further resistance. In many situations parents were coerced into believing that their children were being selected so that they could be sent to school in neighbouring countries or were fighting a just war to liberate their country. The militia groups also used this strategy as a way of strengthening their negotiation powers with government officials. Some armed groups in the South Sudan Defence force continued to recruit children after their incorporation into the SPLA in January 2006.⁸ The Pibor Defence Forces, a group allied to the SPLA, in April 2007 was responsible for the recruitment and use of at least 78 children, the youngest of whom was a boy aged six. Efforts by the Demobilisation, Demilitarisation and Reintegration (DDR) Commission to locate the whereabouts of the children were unsuccessful. These efforts were complicated by the continued Darfur conflict in which thousands of children continued

to be recruited and used by numerous armed groups. In May 2006, SLA-Minawi was observed forcibly recruiting boys in Gereida, and in April 2007 armed children believed to be as young as 12 were observed with SLA-Minawi in Northern Darfur.

Chadian-backed Sudanese armed opposition groups

The protracted instability in Chad and the Darfur region created space for the Sudanese opposition groups to carry out massive child soldier mobilisation and recruitment in refugee camps and internally displaced communities. Those who resisted were subjected to torture and sexual exploitation. According to the UN, despite the widespread evidence and documentation of over 1 000 alleged child abductions and atrocities, the Chadian government has always refuted these allegations.⁹ For example, it is alleged that the G-19 faction of the SLA, with authorisation from the Chadian government, recruited over 4 700 Sudanese refugees, including hundreds of children, from the Breidjing and Treguine UN-supervised refugee camps of Adré in Eastern Chad (Human Rights Watch, 2006). Similar recruitments were reported in the Djabal, Goz Amir and Breidjing refugee camps in Eastern Chad.¹⁰

Lord's Resistance Army

The war in Northern Uganda also had a great impact on South Sudan in the sense that the Lord Resistance Army (LRA) infiltrated South Sudan for the recruitment of children in order to bolster its own militias who were fighting a protracted war with the government of Uganda. As in the other militia groups, the tactics used in the forced recruitment process included torture, killing and abduction. The cessation of hostilities was only realised after the negotiations and the signing of the Juba peace agreement in August 2006. However, despite this short-term positive process, the key commander of the LRA rebel group, Joseph Kony, remains at large, making the achievement of durable peace elusive. This situation continues to affect an estimated number of about 2 000 women and children who allegedly continue to be held hostage in the LRA camps.¹¹ In addition, as long as Kony, the most wanted rebel leader and commander of the LRA, remains on the loose the chances of peace and stability in the neighbouring countries, including South Sudan, remain slim.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement and child reintegration

Following the signing of the 2005 CPA, the government of South Sudan admitted the presence of child soldiers, since it was approached by human rights and child rights organisations, including UNICEF. A more formalised approach to child demobilisation was developed and the government of South Sudan promised the release of 1 500 child soldiers from the SPLA. UNICEF estimated that 9 000 child soldiers were still serving in the North and 3 000 in Southern Sudan rebel militias. The CPA called for a child DDR programme to be implemented in Sudan, specifying that all children be removed from armed forces within a six-month period following the signing of the CPA, and all

separated children be re-united with their families. Analysis shows that the stipulated time period was ambitious and more than six years later, it seems that more than 800 children still remain in the SPLA in Southern Sudan. However, during the six years between 2005 and 2011, some children turned 18 or older and as a result they were no longer eligible for the child DDR process.

Southern Sudan's interim constitution, adopted in December 2005, defined a child as anyone under the age of 18. It stated that, 'Defence of the Sudan in general and Southern Sudan in particular, is an honour and a duty of every citizen' and that 'every citizen shall ... defend the country and respond to the call for national service.' In Southern Sudan, the Child Bill 2006, which prohibited the recruitment of children, passed its first reading in the Southern Sudan Assembly in June 2007.¹² Recruitment and use of children became a breach of both the CPA and the DPA.

Another milestone was reached on 20 November 2009 when the SPLA signed an action plan with the UN regarding Children Associated with the Army in Southern Sudan. In this action plan, the SPLA renewed its commitment to accelerate the demobilisation of children still present in its ranks and the prevention of further recruitment of children.

In South Sudan the government policy for the reintegration of child soldiers is being implemented by the Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration Commission (DDRC), which provides skills training, cooperatives and packages to the demobilised groups, including disabled persons. International organisation support comes from UNICEF, the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and other international organisations that are active in such areas. The strategies for employment focus on building human capacity, literacy and the reintegration of children into civil life. The reintegrated children are given opportunities to go back to school and their school fees, school uniforms and school exercise books are provided by the government and international organisations.

Legal framework for the protection and reintegration of child soldiers

Universal instruments of child protection

Awareness of the law, including empowerment of children and their families to protest against underage recruitment, is crucial for prevention and advocacy strategies and the provision of legal instruments aimed at protecting child soldiers. The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Additional Protocols thereto of 1977 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) of 1989 are the pillars of the legal framework for the involvement of children in armed conflict.

1949 Geneva Conventions

Additional Protocol 1, Article 77 states that:

'Children shall be the object of special respect and shall be protected against any form of indecent assault ...'

The UN (CRC provides the strongest basis of law and guiding principles on child protection and well-being. The demobilisation and reintegration of child soldiers draws specifically on Article 39 of the CRC, which states that:

State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote the physical and psychological recovery and social integration of a child victim of {...} armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child.

In May 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict to the CRC. The Optional Protocol provides the strongest instrument to date prohibiting the use of those under the age of 18 years as soldiers. It replaces Article 38 of the CRC, increasing the minimum age for direct participation in hostilities to 18 years from 15 years. The Optional Protocol includes non-state parties in its prohibitions.

Key provisions of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict

Article 1

State Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that members of their armed forces who have not attained the age of 18 years do not take a direct part in hostilities.

Article 2

State Parties shall ensure that persons who have not attained the age of 18 years are not compulsorily recruited into their armed forces.

Article 3

State Parties shall raise the minimum age in years for the voluntary recruitment of persons into their national armed forces from that set out in Article 38 (3) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, taking account of the principles contained in that article and recognizing that under the Convention persons under 18 are entitled to special protection.

State Parties that permit voluntary recruitment into their national armed forces under the age of 18 shall maintain safeguards to ensure, as a minimum, that:

- a) Such recruitment is genuinely voluntary
- b) Such recruitment is done with the informed consent of the person's parents or legal guardians;

- c) Such persons are fully informed of the duties involved in such military service, and
- d) Such persons provide reliable proof of age prior to acceptance into national service.

Article 4

1. Armed groups that are distinct from the armed forces of a state should not under any circumstances, recruit or use in hostilities persons under the age of 18 years.
2. State Parties shall take all feasible measures to prevent such recruitment and use, including the adoption of legal measures necessary to prohibit and criminalise such practices.

An additional international instrument is the International Labour Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, adopted unanimously in June 1999. Convention 182 prohibits, inter alia, forced or compulsory recruitment of children (persons under the age of 18) for use in armed conflict.

Worst Form of Child Labour Convention, 1999

Article 3

For the purposes of this Convention, the term “the worst forms of child labour” comprises:

- a) All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict (Human Rights Watch, 2007).

In addition, the Statute of the International Criminal Court makes it a war crime to conscript or enlist children under the age of 15 or use them in hostilities in both international and non-international armed conflicts.

Regional instruments are also important. In Africa, the African Union’s African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which stipulates 18 as the minimum age for recruitment, is the strongest protection against child recruitment.

African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

Article 11: For purposes of this Charter, a child means every human being below the age of 18 years.

Article XX11: Armed Conflicts

State Parties to the present Charter shall take all necessary measures to ensure that no child shall take a direct part in hostilities and refrain in particular, from recruiting any child.

State Parties to the present Charter shall, in accordance with their obligations under international humanitarian law, protect the civilian population in armed conflict and shall take all feasible measures to ensure the protection and care of children who are affected by armed conflicts. Such rules shall also apply to children in situations of internal armed conflicts, tension and strife.

A critique of the CRC and the African Charter is that they are only binding on governments, not 'non-state parties', such as rebel or armed opposition groups. However, non-state parties may be willing to commit to these instruments. The humanitarian principles project of Operation Lifeline in Southern Sudan recommended commitment to this principle by non-state parties.

Further analysis shows that in practice, forced recruitment can be blurred with conscription. While conscription policies are legal, armed forces often resort to forcible means of enforcing conscription, such as rounding up young men in markets and at sports events. Such means are illegal, and many who are underage fall victim to these measures. Child rights monitoring should include mechanisms by which cases of underage recruitment can be redressed.

As a policy basis for reintegration programmes, it is recommended that a legal framework on child soldiers be adopted at each country level. South Sudan has clarified age, the basis of determining age, and offers a measure to prevent recruitment by considering that child soldiers have already completed their military service.

Traditional approaches to the reintegration process

Traditional approaches to the reintegration process are becoming an important component of any comprehensive framework to trauma healing, peacebuilding and recovery. The adoption of traditional approaches to the reintegration agenda comes with the realisation of the importance of culture and the family institution as a key component of the broader functional society. Contemporary thinking on any meaningful reintegration process now pays special attention to the role played by traditional mechanisms in accommodating and strengthening the reintegration of former child soldiers into the family and societal systems of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration. The World Bank also acknowledges the importance of the overlapping three-stage reintegration process in the transition from war to peace and development. The three phases of the reintegration are represented as disarmament and demobilisation, reinsertion and reintegration. The disarmament and demobilisation phase includes the identification of former child soldiers, persuading the former combatants to go to secured assembly points, negotiating for the surrender of weapons and the documentation of former combatants as a way of giving them some identity, devising an acceptable benefit or compensation strategy, discarding and destruction of weapons as a sign of breaking away from a traumatic past and preparing for a new life. The logic of this process is to set a peaceful foundation that will build trust and lend legitimacy to the whole reintegration process. In the context of South Sudan, the

major challenges during this phase were lack of adequate preparation in handling a huge number of ex-combatants and former child soldiers, holding the combatants for long periods of time in assembly camps, poor communication strategies and lack of a well-articulated benefit and compensation strategy. In order to motivate the former combatants to surrender their weapons, there was a monetary token for the surrender of guns, a situation which created problems because some combatants started abusing the weaknesses of the new system by disarming multiple times to reap financial benefits. Certain commanders did not want to surrender all their weapons because of lack of trust in the new government and fear of a relapse back into war.

Phase II involves the process of re-insertion, which describes the development of a comprehensive benefit and transitional assistance offered to ex-combatants during demobilisation before long-term reintegration begins. The main objective of the re-insertion phase is the development of trust and confidence in the former combatants, a situation which guarantees cooperation and loyalty, especially where different factions have to be integrated into a single military force. Failure to develop a convincing compensation and reintegration strategy can create anxiety and dissonance among former combatants, a situation that may lead to mutiny. This then calls for the need to develop survivor-centred reintegration processes, which guarantee safety and human security. Many reintegration programmes, including the one in South Sudan, fail during the re-insertion period because funding often dries up at this stage, stalling skills training programmes, psychosocial counselling, trauma healing, access to employment opportunities and cash payments for daily survival.

Phase II defines the reintegration process, which encompasses supporting programmes for the inclusion of the former combatants and former child soldiers in the broader development agenda of the country. Reintegration represents the most difficult of the three phases, as this requires the fulfilment of aspirations and needs of the former combatants, including former child soldiers, in very realistic and practical terms. Issues of identity, belonging and citizenship and the entitlements that come with them become paramount, as these usually form the very basis of having been in the struggle.

This implies the need for a clear and comprehensive definition of the concept of reintegration, which takes into account the cultural context, nature and complexity of the conflict, diversity of groups that were in conflict, the aspirations and needs of those who fought the war. In the context of South Sudan, reintegration would then need to take cognisance of the needs and aspirations of former child soldiers in inclusive terms that embrace the diverse ethnic factional groups, psychosocial support, trauma counselling and the vocational and entrepreneurial skills training aimed at empowering all affected individuals and groups socially and economically. The reintegration process needs to create platforms that guarantee equity and equality among men and women, boys and girls and other vulnerable groups. Because of the importance of culture and ethnicity in South Sudan, reintegration will have to be community-based and participatory in ways that have a positive impact on people's livelihoods and guarantee sustainable peace

and development. This involves respect for traditional rituals and practices such as cleansing ceremonies that facilitate the reintegration of child soldiers into the broader social community. These traditional community-based processes are also very critical for the achievement and legitimisation of locally owned reconciliation and restoration of community unity and dignity.

Given that disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration are extremely emotive and politically charged processes, they require persistent, coordinated political will and advocacy to ensure the inclusion of ex-child soldiers' needs and rights. This viewpoint is reinforced by the Secretary General of the UN:

The role of children in armed conflict should be acknowledged from the onset of peace negotiations and children's rights should be identified as an explicit priority in peacemaking, peace-building and conflict resolution processes, both in the peace agreement and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plans.¹³

Reintegration of women and children

Experiences from Sierra Leone's DDR process revealed serious flaws, as women and girls were often excluded from benefiting from the compensation processes and strategies devised for the male former combatants. This situation supports the common understanding that consequences of war are often felt most by women and girls as vulnerable and marginalised groups. This scenario was no different from the one experienced in South Sudan. In the first instance, involvement as active former child soldiers or combatants is not well documented. One explanation is that in the South Sudanese culture women and girls occupy a very secretive space where they are confined to the private sphere. Exposure of women in the public sphere is not easily encouraged, hence very few girls were recruited as child soldiers. Culturally, women and girls continue to be defined and represented in traditional terms as family assets that will bring economic goods to the family upon marriage. However, with the coming of independence and the promotion of women's rights, the status of women and girls is changing and their prominence as active agents in the liberation struggle is becoming evident. This slow acceptance of women's role in liberation struggles is usually attributed to the patriarchal nature of most societies, including South Sudan, which glorify men's heroism at the expense of women.

The inclusion of women in the current government of South Sudan has helped in changing perceptions about women and their role and participation in the public sphere. The new government, through the Ministry of Gender and Social Welfare, has developed a new gender policy that promotes the active participation of women in all spheres of nation-building as well as holding influential positions in the decision-making architecture of the country. The Ministry, which is headed by a woman, plays an instrumental role in giving vocational skills training to the former child soldiers and other vulnerable groups affected by war. The policy further encourages women to take

influential leadership positions in the different phases of the reintegration programme, including literacy education, lack of which hinders the accelerated empowerment of women and girls.

In the design of comprehensive approaches to the reintegration of child soldiers, human security has become of great importance because of the vulnerability of women and girls. While attention has to be paid to the reintegration of adult combatants, the way of dealing with former child soldiers, the elderly and those with physical and mental disabilities is critical in responding to their needs and aspirations. Advocates of child-sensitive demobilisation and reintegration argue for special criteria that distinguish how former child soldiers and women are treated as distinct from adult male combatants as a way of safeguarding their psychological and emotional well-being. There are suggestions that recognition should be given to the fact that some children would have been involved in war situations for longer periods of time than others, and would have developed hardened personalities and war identities that would require them to undergo extensive counselling and rehabilitation before meaningful reintegration can take place. However, former child soldiers' perception of the status they bring from the war zone, and how they expect to be compensated can create challenges in the sense that they might not be willing to be treated as children, since they would have been leading independent lives in the bush. For example, experience from Burundi revealed that 80 per cent of the children viewed themselves as heads of households, making the whole reintegration process problematic, as they expected to get the same benefits as adult ex-combatants. Similarly, in DRC some women resented being involved in the reintegration programme because of cultural stigmatisation, which associated women combatants as unfit for marriage and child soldiers as outcasts who would have deviated from the norms of society.

These experiences have prompted efforts towards the development of integrated disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration standards as a way of strengthening the reintegration programmes, as they are central to the efficient implementation of any peacebuilding and reconstruction framework. A standardised approach to DDR becomes essential, as it provides a robust framework for the security and sustainable stability conducive for strong economic growth and development of the affect country. If the DDR process is fragile, it will fail to meet fair demands, leading to deeper frustrations and a relapse in to further conflict. Such a situation can easily be manipulated by external neighbouring conflict entrepreneurs and peace spoilers. For example, in Southern Sudan, the first phase of the DDR after the signing of the CPA in 2005 was derailed by the continued cross-border recruitment of Sudanese child soldiers by Uganda's LRA.

Re-thinking the reintegration of child soldiers

Multi-sectoral approach to reintegration

For the effective reintegration of child soldiers, there is a need to adopt multi-sectoral approaches that are responsive to the needs and aspirations of the affected populations. The integrated process, inclusive of disarmament, demobilisation, re-insertion and reintegration, will have to be guided by principles of inclusion, respect, participation, accountability and a sense of social responsibility for all stakeholders and beneficiaries. In the context of South Sudan, these actors include the UNICEF, UNDDR, UNMISS, child protection and international NGOs. Other essential actors include the Ministry of Labour and Public Service, the Ministry of Human Resource Development, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Gender and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Social Development. Collaboration among all actors and stakeholders will ensure a smooth transition anchored in ownership of the whole reintegration process.

Cultural and community-based reintegration process

Community involvement is central to the process of child soldier DDR programmes at several different levels. The importance of the community cannot be over-emphasised, as it forms the nucleus and social fabric of society in dealing with a traumatic past. When a society is ready to accept the former child soldiers and co-exist with them, it provides an enabling environment free from stigmatisation, labelling and glorification of past atrocities. As Honwana¹⁴ points out, a reintegration process that is rooted in reuniting the former child soldiers with their families and communities is more sustainable, as it will be easy to provide for the children's needs and entitlements in the form of education, health care, security and vocational skills as enshrined in the convention on the rights of children. It is also easier to implement community-based projects that will benefit even those communities that will have suffered the consequences of war and conflict.

Community-based reintegration programmes are also important, as they can be therapeutic to the former child soldiers after being socialised into a life of violence and hostility that disregards respect for the values and norms of both the family and the community. A community-based reintegration programme can effectively act as a catalyst to the damage and polarisation caused by war and conflict. Placing the focus on youth who are the vanguard of society, activities would need to emphasise awareness raising on peaceful co-existence and human rights education for the development of self-confidence and respect for others. By representing youth as active participants and agents of positive change, the reintegration process becomes a significant vehicle through which the aspirations of the future generation can be realised.

For example, the experience of former child soldier reintegration in Liberia revealed that community-based measures such as group counselling, incorporating collective conflict resolution approaches, were effective in alleviating psychosocial distress. Former child soldiers can develop positive identity life meanings if spaces are created that allow them to play suitable and inclusive contributory roles in their

families and communities. Thus, cultural and community-based reintegration requires participatory and interactive activities inclusive of former child soldiers.

Community-based reintegration programmes can further be enhanced through collaborative partnerships at the local, national, regional and international levels for the critical financial and human support that is needed in the effective coordination and implementation of programmes. Such collaborative initiatives need to reach out to the vulnerable groups who would normally miss out on the relocation, reunification and resettlement programmes. Central to this process linking socio-economic support with the psychosocial needs of the children, family and community.

Traditional and psychosocial mechanisms to reintegration

The reintegration of children signifies high-level psychosocial questions and challenges because of the devastating consequences of war and conflict on the development of children and the inextricable connection between the emotional, physical and psychological needs of children. Because of the damaging nature of war and the children's experiences as child soldiers, it is not surprising that usually their whole lives are traumatised by the daily sight of death, separation from family members, loss of childhood and destitution, all of which can have devastating consequences on their adulthood.¹⁵ The critical period of adolescence is usually when youth develop their sense of identity about who they are and where they belong. Because of long periods spent as child soldiers, those children find it very difficult to readjust to normal or civilian life because of the dominant status and identity they carried as soldiers who were socialised to kill. Their perception of other people in communities would be that of enemies to be mistrusted, resulting in a repertoire of violent behaviour that compromises their psychological well-being and their ability to recover through reintegration. Therefore, any reintegration programme that does not take into account the psychosocial and emotional needs of the youth is like to be unsustainable.

Innovative social reintegration programmes such as sport for peace or expressive arts for peace, including, drama, music and painting, can be therapeutic, entertaining and empowering. For example, in Sierra Leone football teams for child soldier amputees have brought about remarkable international acclaim and economic empowerment among the former child soldiers and the nation at large.

For a reintegration programme to be effective and responsive, there is a need to recognise the functional role of family and community social contexts that respect the cultural values and norms of the people. Recovery from impaired mental health, depression and war-related stress can only be fully realised if the family and community into which the former child soldiers will be reintegrated are harmonised and form synergies with every aspect of the children's lives. Experiences from Mozambique, Uganda and Sierra Leone have shown that rituals play a very instrumental and therapeutic role in the acceptance of the former child soldiers back into the community. Through community-led and elder-directed cleansing ceremonies, which usually

involve acknowledgement of wrongdoing and proclamations of apology, the reciprocal process of forgiveness, reconciliation and coexistence is easily facilitated.

Such ritualisation and memorialisation practices become very significant, as they build community solidarity and reinforce the legitimacy of the community as a social fabric of society. Such processes also bind the former child soldiers and the community in social and collective grieving, remembering in ways that transcend the traumatic past. Performances that include story-telling, theatre, drama and art work help both the community and former child soldiers to promote peace and social transformation. Experiences in Northern Uganda showed that traditional cleansing ceremonies, cultural and spiritual rituals were significant in creating collective community memories of understanding and sanitisation of former child soldiers. Thus, this approach locates a culturally sensitive environment at the centre of preventive, reconciliation, mediation and psychological healing reintegration processes.¹⁶

Education for peace and the economic empowerment reintegration process

Education plays a very critical role in any reintegration process, as it opens doors and opportunities for children and youth who would have missed opportunities to access education because of their involvement in war. The reintegration process will therefore have to prioritise both formal and informal education as a vehicle through which the government of South Sudan can empower women, girls and boys socially and economically. Education for peace becomes a priority, given the protracted nature of the conflict and the physical and psychological harm done to the different categories of people, in particular the young generation. Education for peace must be transformative in nature, essentially aiming at changing mindsets and hostile behaviour among communities to tolerance and co-existence. Families, for example, need education that will create conducive spaces in their lives to accept back the former child soldiers, many of whom would have committed horrendous atrocities in the same communities. In such an educational process, acknowledgement of the wrongs committed by the former child soldiers would also pave the way for individual, family and community healing to take place in holistic ways. When communities and the former child soldiers acknowledge and accept that all were affected by the effects of the war, then issues of forgiveness and justice can be dealt with empathically and compassionately through education for peace.

Given the chronic levels of poverty and under-development in the newly created nation of South Sudan, it becomes imperative that reintegration should also address livelihood issues in comprehensive ways. Since there is a relationship between the level of education and quality of life, the government of South Sudan will have to formulate deliberate policies that will create smart linkages or synergies with the social and economic well-being of communities in helping the youth in particular to engage in opportunities that will equip them with knowledge and vocational skills to create employment or engage in gainful livelihood activities. This will be done in the full

realisation that given the magnitude of the war and destruction experienced, the process of achieving full economic empowerment as a way of fulfilling people's expectations, especially those of demobilised former child soldiers, will be a slow and difficult process.

The kind of education for peace promoted in the reintegration programme will also have implications for the psychological trauma experienced during the children's conscription into war. It will have to be realised that all education and economic activities will have meaning for the former child soldiers if these activities recognise the damage that war and conflict can do to the emotional and spiritual well-being of people. This implies that the reintegration process will have to include a comprehensive programme of rehabilitation, peacebuilding and empowerment as a way of instilling confidence and trust in the former child soldiers. It has to be realised that unless the former child soldiers have trust in the government's reintegration process, they will not be able to gain full recovery to become active agents of change willing to play meaningful roles in the new nation. For example, in Angola reintegration projects included supporting bakeries for former child soldiers and their families and supporting youth entrepreneurship through funding and material assistance.

Recognising that economic status poses the most significant obstacle to education, a balance must be achieved between the former child soldiers' need to earn an income and the need to resume education. Similar case stories, which showed the importance of linking education to the socio-economic empowerment needs and aspirations of former child soldiers, were found in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Mozambique. These case studies showed that vocational and entrepreneurial education with the emphasis on life and economic skills becomes critical, especially for those former child soldiers who will not be in a position to enter regular school because they are over age and need to make quick, meaningful adjustments to their lives.

Child disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration in Southern Sudan

Child demobilisation started in Southern Sudan in 2001 when the SPLA became the first rebel movement globally to initiate demobilisation of children from armed forces. Between 2001 and 2004, approximately 18 000 children were demobilised from the SPLA and returned home. Since the signing of the CPA in 2005, 4000 children have been demobilised. However, one of the challenges has been that since the signing of CPA, some children entered into SPLA from other armed groups that continue to fight in the 10 states of Southern Sudan.

Stakeholders in the Southern Sudan Child DDR Programme

The establishment of the Interim DDR Programme shortly after the signing of the CPA provided the general framework for a broader DDR in Sudan.

UN system response to DDR

Before the independence of Southern Sudan, UN support for DDR in both North and South Sudan was limited because of the political climate, which did not enable serious disarmament. There were earlier attempts at DDR linked to peace agreements in the 1970s and 1980s, but the institutional record of these is limited, even within government. UNICEF has been supporting the demobilisation of child soldiers in partnership with NGOs, particularly in Southern Sudan, while the UN Development Programme (UNDP) has been supporting a pilot small arms control project in the Nuba Mountains. Successful negotiations between the government and the SPLA/M, which led to the signing of the CPA, paved the way for the development of an inter-agency framework and setting up of common principles, goals and objectives to support the DDR process. This process was also guided and supported by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development Peace Talks. The CPA obligated its signatories to demobilise all children in their ranks by July 2005. The DDR process was government-led and two national bodies were established to implement the programme in Southern Sudan and Northern Sudan.¹⁷

In Southern Sudan, the ex-child soldier DDR programme was formalised through the establishment of the Interim DDR Authorities under the CPA mandate in February 2006. This authoritative body was changed into the Northern Sudan DDR Commission and the Southern Sudan DDR Commission (SSDDRC) in May 2006. In Southern Sudan, UNICEF became the responsible body within the integrated UNDDR unit (UNMISS, UNDP, UNICEF and the UN Population Fund) to support the SSDDRC in implementing the ex-child soldier DDR activities. Despite the establishment of dedicated children's desks within these commissions, the DDR is hampered by the continued conflict in Darfur and by lack of basic infrastructure in communities. Large numbers of children were still held in military barracks beyond the CPA deadline and some children returned to the armed forces because of the lack of an effective reintegration programme.¹⁸

From 2001 to April 2006 an estimated 20 000 children from the SPLA were demobilised and returned to their families and communities with UNICEF support. However, an estimated 2 000 children were still associated with SPLA, mainly in non-combat roles and in remote areas.¹⁹ As of August 2007, the SSDDRC planned the release and reintegration of another 600 children from the SPLA's ranks in Southern Sudan. In June 2007 commanders from both forces made a commitment to end child recruitment, and an area joint military committee action plan to address abductions, rape and sexual violence was developed in the Upper Nile, Jonglei and Unity States.²⁰

DDR challenges in Southern Sudan

It is important to note that remarkable progress in the reintegration of ex-child soldiers in Southern Sudan has been made despite challenges and resistance during the disarmament

of the competing fighting forces and militias because of claims that their interests and security concerns had not been adequately addressed by the CPA. Because of lack of trust and fear that the war would erupt again, many former militias, including former child soldiers, moved between the armed forces of the north and the south as a way of protecting themselves from the insecurity of the new political situation, while at the same time the north continued to exploit the youth against the south. Those child soldiers that agreed to be demobilised did so on the understanding that they were going to be reintegrated into society through the umbrella arm of UN agencies that included the UNICEF, UNDP and UNMISS. The challenge remains with the militias who have not given up their positions to join the Southern or Northern army. Instead they confuse the situation by straddling the Southern and Northern armies, a situation that gives currency to the use of child soldiers by the rebels. The militias who have joined the government are considered the country's defence forces and should be obliged to abide by the national law and surrender the child soldiers in their custody, as demanded by law. To respond to these challenges, it is suggested that there is need for the government to:

- Identify reintegration opportunities for demobilised combatants, the majority of whom are from Southern Sudan where there are few viable livelihood opportunities;
- Address the underlying causes of the conflict that are not addressed by the CPA and that sustain the demand for weapons or at a minimum find ways to enhance community security in return for disarmament, taking into account that civilian policing and legal systems may lack capacity to sustain long-term justice;
- Ensure adequate measures to facilitate reconciliation once combatants disarm, for example among neighbouring communities that have backed different factions or where tension may rise over access to resources and property;
- Strengthen national and community-based capacities to handle a DDR process; and
- Address the issues of patriarchy and masculinity, which remain embedded in most communities in South Sudan, as these cultural factors may militate against reintegration efforts.

Conclusion

The chapter has examined the phenomenon of child soldiers as very complex from the global analysis that universalises children as vulnerable victims of the political manipulations of those who do not share the global debate. Using South Sudan as a case study, the chapter advocated the need to place macro- and micro-contexts in any conceptualisation of the reintegration programme. The reintegration of girl child soldiers is not only complex, but also gendered and intertwined with dynamics of power and power relations, patriarchy and masculinity, a situation that demands sustained international attention and research. Psychosocial programming aimed at addressing

the diverse needs of girl child soldiers would benefit from the integration of local systems of cultural knowledge and practices responsive to healing and reconciliation needs. The reintegration of child soldiers goes beyond the act of demobilisation from armies to the organisation of educational programmes that can help communities receive the children back. A comprehensive approach to the reintegration of child soldiers is inclusive of addressing the root causes of the conflict, compensation, educational skills training, innovative programmes such as expressive arts, psychosocial support and income generation to increase the potential for economic and social integration, as well as strengthening national policies and community capacities to deal with the reintegration processes and systems at both the macro- and micro-levels.

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An African odyssey: from child soldiering to peacemaker

Morris Matadi, Alphonse Keadley, and Laura DeLuca

Introduction

In this chapter, we chronicle the journey of Morris Matadi, a former child soldier (FCS) turned peacemaker. In this quest, Matadi traverses an unpredictable landscape in the non-linear process of becoming a peacemaker. This chapter is based on interviews that Dr Alphonse Keadley and Dr Laura DeLuca conducted with Matadi Matadi.

Matadi found himself living the history of Liberia's unrest. The First Liberian Civil War was an internal conflict that lasted from 1989 until 1996. More than 200 000 people were killed and eventually the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations became involved. Peace negotiations and foreign involvement led to a ceasefire in 1995 that was broken in 1996. In 1999, the Second Liberian Civil War broke out.

We begin his story as a vulnerable child bereft of parents caught in the maelstrom of Liberia's civil war. In search of sustenance and stability, Matadi was drawn to a general who played the role of surrogate parent in the life of an impressionable youth. For nearly a decade, Matadi participated in the life of a child soldier. This chapter is about Matadi's personal journey from child soldier to peacemaker who founded the Initiative for the Development of Former Child Soldiers (IDEFOCS), which works to help other ex-combatants. This chapter is unique because it is about an insider – someone who understands child soldiering from his first-hand personal experience. The chapter integrates a first-person narrative style with analysis and illustrates the idea of 'peace from within.' While we recognise that the Matadi story offers significant insights into the experience of child soldiers, we resist any simplistic, reductionist portrayal of ex-combatants and peacebuilding, because of the range of different experiences.

We follow Matadi's journey to reveal lessons about creating 'peace from within' individually, in the community, in the nation of Liberia, the region of West Africa, and beyond. Through Matadi's chapter we learn more about the world of a child soldier: What does it mean to miss school for the FCSs? What do FCSs miss through not having had the chance to be a child? What does it mean to miss childhood play? Is an 11-year-old homeless orphan really in a position to *choose* to join an army? What is the social system like for FCSs? Why did Matadi join the Liberian rebel group? What motivated this choice?

Not unlike the experience of Ishmael Beah described in *A long way gone*, the story of a boy soldier during a civil war in Sierra Leone, Matadi, in the context of Liberia, found himself struggling in the same way that Ishmael, his brother, and his friends struggle for survival. Matadi's experience also shares some commonality with that of Valentino Achak Deng, which is detailed in the book, *What is the what: The autobiography of Valentino Achak Deng*,² that describes the experience of an unaccompanied minor of Sudan. Matadi's story also relates to *The voices of children in war*,³ a book that explores child soldiering through personal portraits of youth in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sudan and beyond. Matadi's chapter adds to this literature through providing a nuanced description of the life of a FCS in Liberia. It also extends beyond description of child soldiering to illustrate how he persevered to realise his dream of peacemaking for FCSs.

Matadi was captured by rebel forces on 27 July 1990 and forcibly conscripted into the army. Matadi's childhood dream of becoming a pilot was shattered when the civil war broke out in Liberia. In December 1989, former government minister Charles Taylor played an instrumental role in starting the uprising in Liberia. Taylor moved back into Liberia from neighbouring Ivory Coast to topple the government of Samuel Doe, who had come into power through a coup. 'Doe came to power as Liberia's first indigenous president, a symbolically important event that many believed would herald substantive changes.'⁴ Prior to Doe's election, the so-called Americo-Liberians (descendants of African-American slaves) governed the country from 1847 to 1980. Over time, indigenous Liberians grew to resent domination by the elite minority Americo-Liberian group. When Doe gained power, indigenous Liberians (Kpelle, Bassa, Gribo, Kru, Krahn, Vai and others) expected improvements in their lives. Unfortunately, Doe became increasingly dictatorial and at the same time the economy of Liberia shrunk. These factors, as well as others, led to the unrest.

Matadi was a child soldier. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) a child soldier is any boy or girl under 18 years of age who is part of any kind of regular or irregular armed force or armed group in any capacity. While there is some debate over varying cultural standards of maturity, no group we are aware of suggests that 11-year-olds should be able to fight for an army. For more details on policy related to FCSs, see Pamela Machakanja's chapter in this volume.

Matadi describes his experience as an 11-year-old. 'My parents were killed in front of me and after that I was adopted ... I took the opportunity for revenge ... I was trying to hide but they [the rebel army] found me and they took me along with them.' This sequence of events highlights what it means to be a child who is becoming a child soldier: witnessing the heinous act of seeing his mother and father killed, surviving alone and then experiencing feelings of revenge. The reaction of wanting revenge is mildly similar to that of any child on a soccer field who wants to retaliate when he feels he is wronged; however, in Matadi's situation, his desire for revenge for the loss of his

parents, the people who loved him and created security for him, but who were violently and suddenly taken away from him, was a powerful motivator.

Matadi writes that as a child soldier he was ‘conscripted into the rebels’ army by first [toting] weapons and supplies and then as a full-time soldier.’ He adds, ‘What I did and saw under the influence of elder soldiers and drugs is unspeakable.’ After six years of being a child soldier, Matadi was given the opportunity to participate in the peace process led by the international community in 1995.

What make me move from being a child soldier to a peacemaker today. It was in 1995, ... when international community said that ... every rebel leader – there were seven rebel leaders in the bush by then – were told they should come to town, disarm, and make their way to elections ... so my group came to town which was the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) – I was led by Charles Taylor – so when we came to town we were disarmed.

Matadi witnessed another way of life while in Monrovia for the peace meetings. This peace process and the role that Liberian women played are described in the award-winning documentary, *Pray the devil back to hell*.

After six years of living away from his extended family, he was able to reconnect with his uncle and others. Matadi says,

So when we came to town we were disarmed, we were keep in town I saw a little bit of humanity I went back to where we used to stay – to my parents’ home. I met different groups in there I went and reunited with those group ... and started living at the center visiting my headquarters because every rebel group by then they came to Monrovia. Every morning every one of us had to report to our bureau headquarters ... I started to feel another way of life. People started to love me and people started to remember my parents the good things they did for them. They were so happy of seeing I alone and laugh at them and there was my uncles and my other neighbours and other things so I decided to go back to school all by myself.

Matadi’s individual change was mediated by the 1995 peace process that gave him the opportunity to reunite with relatives when the rebels were called to go to Monrovia by the international community. For the first time in his interrupted childhood he felt the love of his family members and that he belonged to his traditional family. When asked about becoming a peacemaker, Matadi talks about family. For Matadi it comes back to family.

At one point Matadi came to the realisation that others outside the world of child soldiering were living a normal life while he and his friends were being treated poorly. He says, ‘They treated us as gorillas; they treat us as animals’ and talks about how many child soldiers recruited for that operation were being killed in the anti-terrorist unit.

I had seen other people in the capital living normal life going to school. I felt that I personally could do the same. I personally could do the same and change my environment and be able to change my way of life so that I could be able to regain my respect. And what I wanted at least was do a little bit to improve my own life and other people's lives so I left and ran away [to] Ghana.

In Ghana he stayed in the Buduburam refugee camp for Liberians who had fled the war. This was an important transition because Matadi moved beyond thinking exclusively about himself to thinking about other child groups as a community.

Like Homer's *Odysseus*, Matadi faced challenges in his quest. (Though we use Homer's *Odyssey* from Western literature to discuss Matadi's journey, there are a number of African books that explore the quest theme in a way that may have more relevance for Matadi's West African journey. These include Amos Tutuola's *The palmwine drinkard* and Chief Fagunwa's *The forest of a thousand demons*. There are also J.P. Clark's *The Ozidi saga*, Biebyuck's *The Mwindo Epic* of the Ba nyanga of Malawi, and Adrian Onyando's *The epic of Gor Mahia*.) Along the journey to becoming a peacemaker there were several setbacks. Even after Matadi had arrived in the supposedly safe haven of the refugee camp, rebel groups came to re-recruit child soldiers. The rebel groups were trying to pay them to return to fight their own people. The process of leaving child soldiering and becoming a peacemaker was non-linear: he came out of the bush for the 1995 peace meetings; in the capital city of Monrovia, he met with family members and others who knew his parents; after seeing the family members he attempted to go to school but he was then re-recruited to work in the anti-terrorism unit for the newly elected government of Charles Taylor. At that point, Matadi says, 'No, I went and started a campaign (against the re-recruitment).' So this was an additional stage in Matadi's movement to becoming an activist in his own community as part of his journey to becoming a peacemaker.

In 2002, another rebel group came to the Ghanaian camp to recruit soldiers. Matadi says,

So, I said to myself I can't continue living my life [the way] that it was ... When other young people out [there] they are free and moving and living a normal life and going to school. And I think I gotta make my way out of this thing that I found myself. So I worked for the anti-terrorist unit for three years from 1997-2000.

History and biography

Matadi's life is a testimony to C. Wright Mills's⁵ concept of 'the sociological imagination' that insists on understanding people in terms of the intersection of their own lives (their biographies) and their larger social and historical context (in history). In this case, Matadi's life history is clearly shaped by the civil wars in Liberia and the regional conflicts in West Africa. Mills links personal troubles and public issues. As part of his

growth in becoming a peacebuilder/leader, Matadi began to recognise that the issues he and the other child soldiers faced were not personal issues limited to the local situation but were linked to larger structural issues. He describes the struggles of FCSs living in the refugee camp in Ghana and moving to urban areas in Accra and also living in the slums of Monrovia. Instead of seeing their struggles as individual problems, he framed them as being part of a larger public issue.

In the quotations below Matadi describes the personal troubles side of the ‘sociological imagination’ concept and then later puts the child soldiers’ experiences into larger social and historical context.

Yeah there was a lot of difficulties and challenges. You yourself in the USA would not be able to stand. Nobody in the USA can stand the tension of being, I mean of living, as a child soldier going through a normal life. Can you imagine? People that would hurt, people that saw us doing things that we are not supposed to do. They saw us with arms. So my charity was there. Many of them to kill [us]... wanted revenge on us especially for me and others ... and other even took revenge on others as child soldier. And those child soldiers was killed by a new people in the refugee camp. I personally slept outdoors for six months.

Matadi continues to discuss the challenges of Liberians living together away from home in a Ghanaian camp.

As Matadi indicated in the previous statements, on a personal level, they were searching for a place to live, they were searching for safety. This was one of the first political challenges that they experienced. They could not earn money to pay for a regular place to live. For example, Matadi himself talks about sleeping outdoors for six months. In terms of safety, it was not just about who wanted to stay but also about the others in the community who wanted to take revenge on former ex-combatants. He also moves beyond himself to talking about including the other FCSs living in the same conditions. This was a pivotal peacebuilding moment in Matadi’s life.

Matadi continues:

Yes! Other people took revenge on them and some are found killed by unknown people ... a lot of challenges. Those people that were not found and many times we were also attacked in the public because people swore at us again and deny us getting our refugee supplies because we were former child soldier. A lot of challenges! A lot of things that were wrong. There were a lot of things ... Former child soldiers [turned] to be a hard criminal in those days living in Ghana, becoming armed robbers. And many of them were thieving and they were killed – those who were caught stealing were killed. Many of them started joining with the Ghanaian gang and they started armed robbery. But if our own community who were on a rebel side with us they tried to help [they caused more conflict]. I don’t think many of us wanna be found dead in Ghana by then. There was a lot former child soldier on a camp.

Matadi's quotations below discuss the impact of the war on the individuals in the Monrovia.

'Former child soldiers would be faced with the discrimination and the marginalization and the stigmatization.' Drawing from Link and Phelan,⁶ the FCSs were labelled through their human differences and subsequently negative stereotypes associated with undesirable characteristics as FCSs were ascribed to them. This then separated them from others in the refugee camp and ultimately they were discriminated against and lost their social, economic and political potential for power. Those other FCSs turned to crime. According to Matadi,

they were caught thieving, caught stealing and people killed them for that. And besides ... People took personal revenge, revenge on them: even for some of us, people throw words at us. That means deny us for not having certain privileges that all refugee supposed to have so we were left out of the camp – we all needed to live in the ghetto. So the ghetto was like living in a slum: nothing good come to us. More former child soldier in the ghetto where you find more former child soldiers.

Matadi goes on to address the structural and/or historical element when he talks about how the politicians, 'the educated' people and adults played a role in misleading the child soldiers.

OK for me making peace with myself I have, I have made up my mind and I have I myself have reconciled with myself long time because I got to realize that I wasn't the cause. I know why I wasn't the cause for my participation into the armed conflict as a child soldier – it was those people ... politicians. It was those people those educated people what, who guide us that could protect us that could show us a good path which they never did ... it was wrong path. We ... We were children. So I realize that I wasn't the cause, so I should be able to reconcile with myself, and reconcile with other people. So for me I'm not, I'm not guilty of anything that I did in the war, I am not guilty. I am only guilty of preparing myself and preparing other people to be a good citizen.

As Matadi discusses the structural elements and resists guilt, he begins to put together the pieces of the larger puzzle and realises that he and other child soldiers were used as pawns in a larger game that went beyond Liberia and Sierra Leone. The clues eventually point toward larger West African regional conflicts and complex global causes, such as the diamond trade and historical factors, among others, that fuelled wars in West Africa. For example, Matadi includes both the personal story of child soldiers and the public or historical context when he describes the task of his NGO, IDEFOCS. The organisation is a grassroots civil society organisation founded by FCSs dedicated to the prevention of the use of children in war and to the re-recruitment of FCS in conflicts around Africa. IDEFOCS is also dedicated to the restoration in the larger West African region.

In the following quotation, Matadi describes his personal transformation of achieving 'peace from within', which ultimately led to him becoming a peacemaker.

He moved away from child soldiering and awakened to the fact that he and the other child soldiers were intentionally misused by adults and politicians and did not get the opportunity to go to school as normal children would.

Matadi recalls the kind of person he wanted to be and the kinds of goals he had for himself:

What motivated me to leave this entire process [child soldiering], as I said. I told you why – to change my life because I felt that we as children were misused by those politicians because their children were going to school and we were not going to school. And were of the school age we need an education and we were there and while we were there or whatever they wanted to torture us, so I decide to leave because I also wanted to be a good person a good citizen of my country. I also wanted to be a good parent – in my three kids' lives. I always wanted to be the person I wanted to be! When my parents were alive, I always wanted to be somebody. I always wanted to be somebody that my children ... my neighbour, my brothers, my cousins, the rest of the people could count on. So I knew that if I was gonna to leave the entire process and go through all the endurance that I wanted be at the level today.

Matadi survived the dangers of personal weapons of destruction – the AK 47 that he carried for more than 10 years – and the rebel opponents who were shooting at him. His vision of himself as a 'good person' was never killed: throughout his time as a child soldier, he maintained a strong desire to become the person whom his parents had nurtured during the 11 years of his life with them. Exemplifying the lessons that he learned from his family and community, he continued his work with other FCSs and displayed *ubuntu* value qualities through sharing his transformation process and knowledge gained, with them. His development and journey as a peacemaker began incorporating others – moving from within himself to interpersonal and community peacemaking.

As indicated in the following comments, the challenges and difficulties of working with other FCSs did not dissuade him:

The public stigmatize us and it's true they [FCS] are stigmatized; so [so it is] something that they cannot forgive themselves. These are some of the challenges ... We are not willing to forgive ourselves – people who are not willing to participate in the programme ... to change, to change because we have a positive action. Change is the key to our lives ... It's hard because they don't have confidence – they have no self-confidence to come back to society.

It's a big question [what drives me to change other former child soldiers]. And to tell you the truth, that's a lot, to tell you the truth. If I tell you I know what drove me, what I'm doing now, then, I don't know what to tell you. I just saw myself doing it and have more passion ... and I have my will and my connection to people who come in to help everyone else.

In keeping with the trope of an African odyssey, Matadi was compelled to work with FCS but did not have any plan worked out in advance. He recognised that his passion for peacebuilding came from within him. Similarly, many involved in peacemaking and peacebuilding may also be acting from that which is deep within their being. This is truly about passion – an unknown wellspring; his commitment to the work with FCS runs deep. In the interview, he says:

‘I just [have] that love and passion of helping myself and other people. That’s all that drove me.

Yes, if I could [change], then I knew that other former child soldiers [could also change] but they just need somebody to love them. They just need someone to care for them.’

In the Lederach chapter in this volume, there is a section that documents how Liberian rural communities draw on traditional practices of reintegration. The authors describe the ‘tree of frustration’ where ex-combatants and FCSs met with mothers and women near a group of trees on the edge of the village. Eventually, the women brought food and sometimes sang with them and convinced them to cut their matted hair in a meaningful ritual so they could be reintegrated and accepted into rural life.

In contrast, Matadi works in an urban setting (in Monrovia, Liberia and Freetown, Sierra Leone) in which tree of frustration type practices were minimally available. His call for love, patience, and self-forgiveness approximates these traditional practices that are essential in the urbanised setting.

Matadi emphasises repeatedly the importance of loving and rebuilding the self-confidence of FCS.

To tell you the truth I love [helping] in our community. The only thing I want [for them] is love. I always told many people to come to us in the ghettos in the [city] and communicate so that you can come to us and have some positive speaking programme. That we can sit down and listen to them and see the love and the pleasure and the passion.

Some of the challenges I had working with former child soldiers: we don’t have our own camp but we have a strategy ... we don’t have our own camp. Another of our challenges is the resources: resource management, natural resource—we need all those things to make more impact. Some of the challenges we [have] is that people [who] don’t have confidence in us establishing our own programmes. People don’t want to be identified with us: [they say to us this FCS] ‘is going to have the opportunity [to go to] school no way.’ They don’t want to be identified with us – to come to us. Many people [want us to] go to them.

I recommend people who are helping other former child soldiers have to be very patient in the way [they approach] former child soldier. And secondly, show them love and be respectful: they need to hold themselves responsible.

As a way of concluding we return to our initial questions about what it is like to be an 11-year-old who lost his family, missed the world of child's play and were forced to tackle unreasonable questions without the benefit of many and substantive lived experiences. As an ex-combatant-turned-peacemaker, Matadi's journey reveals aspects of the child soldier's world. Against all odds, his core *ubuntu*-like values prevailed and allowed him to seek peace from within himself and resolve to be a peacemaker in spite of the historical forces surrounding him. He continues today despite the many challenges and remains dedicated to bringing peace from within through his work as executive director/founder of IDEFOCS. He works closely with the urban community of child soldiers in Monrovia and Freetown, especially in the informal settlements. Based on personal experience as an FCS and professional experience with IDEFOCS,

Policy recommendations

Matadi recommends the following policy statements:

- It is critical to involve ex-combatants and FCSs in social programmes aimed at them such as the UN's Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Programme.
- It is important to conduct a community needs assessment before launching a programme for FCS. IDEFOCS in collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh developed a method of working with child soldiers called Survey, Detraumatization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration.
- It is necessary to create practical opportunities for FCS to build skills and confidence. For example, IDEFOCS developed the botanical reintegration village – a reintegration camp for FCS; FCSs live and work in the camp for 18 months.
- There is a need for post-reintegration investment. These programmes need to recognize the importance of long-term commitment to reintegration. Reintegration and rehabilitation require time. There is a need for long-term support for FCS-related programmes as opposed to the shorter-term support often emphasised by donor organisations. Professionals who are helping with FCS rehabilitation must be very patient and show them love. Also, it is important not to remind children of the past because that could retraumatise them. The professionals must teach the FCS not to hold themselves responsible or to feel guilty about their actions and to recognise that they were manipulated by adults and governments who had their own selfish interests in mind. FCS must be taught that they are not the cause of the problem.
- It is key for FCS to have their own schools. Never integrate FCS into mainstream schools, as they are older than traditional students and it can be humiliating for them to join a traditional school. Do not mix them with children who are not FCS.
- Instead of giving money directly to child soldiers, ask child soldiers what they need and when appropriate, give them the item directly; for example, if they request

books, give them books or if they indicate that they need food, give them food instead of cash.

- Recognise the different needs (and marginalisation) of female and male FCSs and that female FCSs may be even more challenging to reach through programmes.

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Addressing ethno-political conflicts through the concept of *Abanyarwanda*: a case of 'ethnic amnesia' in Rwanda?

Martha Mutisi

Introduction

This chapter offers a post-structural analysis of the concept of *Abanyarwanda* in post-genocide Rwanda. Analysing politics, power and discourse in post-genocide Rwanda, the chapter focuses on how Rwanda is evoking notions of unity as a well of confronting ethno-political conflict. Based on fieldwork conducted in July 2011, as well as a review of secondary data on related themes, this chapter explores the *Abanyarwanda* concept as a strategy that is being used by the Rwandan government to address its ethno-political conflict in the aftermath of conflict. During the fieldwork, the author interacted with Rwandan people at all levels of society, including government officials, academics, civil society organisations, ordinary citizens and members of the *abunzi* mediation committees, as well as those who were accused of genocide crimes and survivors of genocide. The result of this holistic interaction is a nuanced understanding of Rwandan life in a post-conflict context.

Post-genocide Rwanda has followed a unique path towards addressing the challenge of ethno-political conflict, adopting what would be labelled as 'ethnic amnesia', a strategy that almost obliterates ethnicity from the everyday practices of society. Rwanda's strategy is quite different from that of many other countries that have been affected by ethno-political conflict. For example, Rwanda's neighbour, Burundi, has actually chosen to flaunt ethnicity and address ethnic inequalities in its political discourse. In Burundi, ethnicity is a subject of political discussion and it is a theme that even found space in the 2000 Arusha Peace Agreement. Although Burundi and Rwanda and neighbours and are often considered as having undergone similar horrific experiences, their approach to the challenges of ethno-political violence are dissimilar. Indeed, post-conflict Rwanda is characterised by the evocation of the notion of *Abanyarwandwa* (Rwandan-ness) which essentially means that Rwandans have a shared past, and that they are not disaggregated groups such as Hutu, Tutsi or Twa.

This chapter examines the implications of Rwanda's strategy of addressing the challenges of a post-genocide society, namely its desire to 'sweep ethnicity under the carpet'. Although focus will also be placed on the benefits of this notion of *Abanyarwanda*, the chapter will analyse how failure to discuss ethnicity is likely leave deep-seated tensions unresolved.

Rwanda: a background

Rwanda has a population of about 10 million people, comprising three ethnic groups, the Hutu (84%), the Tutsi (15%) and the Twa (1%).¹ Formerly part of the Belgian trusteeship territory of Ruanda-Urundi, Rwanda gained its independence in July 1962. Rwanda had the misfortune of experiencing the worst form of ethno-political conflict, i.e. the 1994 genocide, which witnessed many Tutsis being killed and moderate Hutus also being targeted by the majority Hutus. To understand the context of the 1994 genocide, a brief history of Rwanda will be proffered.

Post-independent Rwanda was governed by the Hutu leader, President Gregoire Kayibanda, who established the Forum for the Emancipation of the Hutus (Parmehutu party). Kayibanda reversed the status and roles between Tutsis and Hutus, by introducing quotas, which limited Tutsis participation in employment, education and other areas. Post-independent Rwanda consequently witnessed the emergence of Hutu hegemony in a context where the Tutsi minority had long been considered the aristocracy of Rwanda during the period of Belgian colonial rule.

Kayibanda's tenure was interrupted when in 1975, General Juvenal Habyarimana, who was then serving as an Army Chief of Staff in the National Army, seized power from Kayibanda and the Parmehutu party, ultimately placing Kayibanda under house arrest.² In 1975, Habyarimana formed the Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND), and immediately decreed that it would be the only legal political party in Rwanda. Rwanda essentially became a de facto one-party state under Habyarimana, who ruled from 1974 to 1993. Eventually Habyarimana's regime began to mirror the same policies adopted by President Kayibanda, as evidenced by the continuance with the quota system, which limited educational and employment opportunities for Tutsis.

Growing dissent from the Tutsis who were disadvantaged by the Habyarimana regime led to burgeoning emigration of Tutsis into neighbouring Uganda. The Tutsi refugees formed the bulk of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), which in 1990 invaded Rwanda from Uganda, thus beginning a three-year-long civil war between the RPF and the government of Rwanda's armed forces. Following the civil war, a number of ceasefire agreements were signed, including the Arusha Accord, which was signed on 22 July 1992.³ The Arusha Accord provided for the presence in Rwanda of a 50-member Neutral Military Observer Group I, which was supported by the Organisation of African Unity. In June 1993, the United Nations (UN) began its active involvement in Rwanda, where upon request from Rwanda and the UN, it deployed the United Nations Observer Mission in Uganda-Rwanda along the Rwanda-Uganda border to prevent the military use of the area by the RPF. The Arusha Accords called for a democratically elected government as well as the establishment of an inclusive transitional government in preparation for democratic elections, as well as the repatriation of refugees and integration of the armed forces of the RPF and the Rwandan government.

The Arusha Accords lasted for a brief period until the assassination of the Hutu leader, President Habyarimana, in a plane crash on 6 April 1994. The assassination

of President Habyarimana is often described as a trigger or catalyst to the 1994 genocide. Immediately, after the plane had been shot down, Hutu extremists began an extraordinary orgy of killings of Tutsi and moderate Hutus, including Prime Minister Uwilingimana. The genocide ended in July 1994 with the RPF taking over, creating a government and subsequently declaring commitment to the 1993 Arusha Agreement. The genocide left many scars in Rwandan society, including displacement, as many Rwandans were forced to live as refugees in neighbouring countries and outside the African continent.

The reconciliation agenda: a strategy for addressing the difficult past

Post-conflict Rwanda is often looked at as a symbol of hope, resilience and determination by scholars, policy-makers and the international community alike. Indeed, 18 years after the 1994 genocide, the country is being recognised for its remarkable socio-economic recovery efforts, which include massive efforts to reduce poverty, a parliament consisting of 53 per cent of women, a growing economy and a glowing report on sustainable development and environmental management.⁴ Other accolades for Rwanda involve efforts to promote accountability and reconciliation through *gacaca* courts, which formed the country's transitional justice system.⁵

The RPF government was faced not only with the reality of a broken economy, but also most importantly, a torn social fabric, broken relations and mistrust among the population. There was therefore a strong need for the government to reject all forms of ethnic divisionism of the past and adopt the concept of 'national unity' with the goal of promoting reconciliation. Rwanda can be considered as having embarked on a largely grandiose post-conflict reconstruction and healing process. Efforts to rebuild peace in Rwanda have been geared towards building trust among Rwandans. With the official conclusion of *gacaca* court hearings in 2010, the Rwandan government continues spreading its message of reconciliation in various policy documents and actions. Reconciliation has emerged as a strong narrative for the Rwandans from the government to civil society and ultimately to grassroots communities.

The government of Rwanda acknowledges the social, psychological and emotional toll of the genocide on Rwandan society, including 'the destruction of social bonds', hence the stated objectives of 'bridging the rifts within society and healing the wounds of those afflicted by genocide'.⁶ The argument is that an ethnically unified Rwanda is the key to sustaining present and future peace and is the vehicle towards sustainable peace, reconciliation, development and democracy. This is where the *Abanyarwanda* notion comes in, with its emphasis on bridging the identity fissures and promoting one-ness.

At national level, the *Abanyarwanda* concept has been reinforced by statutory and legal provisions. Article 33 of the Rwandan Constitution condemns divisionism in Rwanda and specifically states that the 'propagation of ethnic, regional, racial discrimination or any other form of division is punishable by law.' Discrimination is defined in Article 1 as

any speech, writing, or actions based on ethnicity, region or country of origin, the colour of the skin, physical features, sex, language, religion or ideas aimed at depriving a person or group of persons of their rights as provided by Rwandan law and by International Conventions to which Rwanda is a party.

The *Abanyarwanda* concept, which is encouraged by Rwanda's reconciliation policy, seeks to recreate a non-ethnic Rwandan society that existed before colonialism. According to this *Abanyarwanda* narrative, prior to the colonial era, Rwanda comprised a harmonious and egalitarian society where the difference between Hutus, Tutsis and Twas was not ethnic-based.

Scrutinising the notion of *Abanyarwanda*

The concept of *Abanyarwanda* literally means those who come from Rwanda or 'people of Rwanda', and it collectively refers to the Hutus, Tutsis and Twas who currently live in Rwanda. When a Rwandan refers to Rwandans as a people, the word *Abanyarwanda* is used to distinguish them from citizens of other states. *Umunyarwanda* therefore is singular for Rwandans (*Abanyarwanda*). Essentially, *Abanyarwanda* aims to replace ethnicity and other potentially 'divisive' sub-state loyalties with an undifferentiating concept of 'Rwandan-ness'. The concept of *Abanyarwanda* is used to glorify Rwanda's past where various groups lived in peace and intermarried.⁷

It is believed that *Abanyarwanda* as a group of peoples existed before colonisation by the Germans and Belgians.⁸ *Abanyarwanda* was then a community of Rwandans who existed before colonialism. Anastase further explains that these *Abanyarwanda* lived in the same community and had the same myth of origin, which expressed that they were heirs of the same ancestral father, *Kanyarwanda*. In addition, *Abanyarwanda* are said to have practised the same culture, sworn allegiance to the same monarch, *Umwami*, spoken the same language, which is *Kinyarwanda*, and intermarried. Many other authors, including Prunier and Mamdani, trace the division of identity groups to external fomentations, asserting that the notion of ethnic difference between the Hutus, Tutsis and Twas was only elevated to racial differences by the colonialists.⁹

In contemporary Rwanda, the concept of *Abanyarwanda* is heavily advocated by the RPF government and it underscores 'Rwandan-ness' as opposed to being Hutu, Tutsi or Twa. The Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) government underscores the notion that Rwandan people are one big family, that is, *umuryango ubumwe*. The concept of national unity was first envisioned by the RPF during the Arusha Peace Accords of 1993 as a strategy to promote ethnic unity among all Rwandans, to redress the historical problem of ethnic discrimination and exclusion and ultimately to promote unity among Rwandans. Schools in Rwanda have been instructed to teach a curriculum that is in line with the narrative of unity and reconciliation, emphasising the notion of *Abanyarwanda*. This approach is envisaged to instil a sense of oneness among Rwandans, as they are encouraged to look back to their shared past, thus promoting an 'imagined community'

or a sense of ‘imagined belonging’.¹⁰ In many community processes and official events, the concept of *ubumwe’ bw’Abanyarwanda* (unity and togetherness among Rwandans) is emphasised.

Calls for *Abanyarwanda* epitomise the idea of nationalism, where often a strong leader rallies the local population to galvanise as one community with the aim of achieving a set of overarching goals. The concept of Rwandan people being one group is not only found in policy and political circles. In scholarly literature, anthropologists and historians are keen to trace the origins of Rwandan people from the same ancestry. These scholars (Mbanda, Mamdani, and Prunier) posit that the ‘ethnicisation’ or ‘racialisation’ of Rwandan peoples is a product of the colonialists who deliberately manipulated small differences between the groups for their selfish ends.¹¹ According to a scholar, Mbanda,

Rwanda is home to a people called the Banyarwanda, who embrace three groups – Hutu, Tutsi and Twa – of the same nation. Let me say it again: three groups of the same nation. Although these groups have been referred to as ‘ethnic’ or ‘tribal’ groups, they share a common language and Rwandan elders believe that these three groups are one people with a common ancestry.¹²

Similarly, Prunier explains the notion of Rwandan ‘oneness’, asserting that:

The first explorers who reached Rwanda and Burundi were immediately struck by the fact that the population though linguistically and culturally homogeneous, was divided into three groups, the Hutu, the Tutsi and the Twa. These are the people who have often inappropriately been called the ‘tribes’ of Rwanda. They had none of the characteristics of tribes, which are micro-nations. They shared the same Bantu language, lived side by side with each other without any ‘Hutuland’ or ‘Tutsiland’ and often intermarried.¹³

The *Abanyarwanda* concept was epitomised by President Paul Kagame during a speech at the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco on 7 March 2003, where he posited:

The different sections of Rwandans, Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa, are and were, until the colonial adventure, *Banyarwanda* – or Rwandan people.¹⁴

During a speech presented on the 18th commemoration of the Rwandan genocide on 10 April 2012, President Kagame said genocide was unlikely to happen again, not in a million years. He attributed this conviction to the spirit of reconciliation in the country. Specifically, President Kagame was quoted by a local newspaper, *Uburenganzira*, as saying that:

If we, Rwandans, had not learnt from this ugly history, to build unity and reconciliation for our people, we would still have our own affairs managed by other people. This is the face and spirit with which we have confronted the post genocide period.¹⁵

These utterances reflect a deep conviction on the part of government that the problem of ethnicity in Rwanda can be addressed by reverting to the original concept of oneness and espousing the virtues of reconciliation, which essentially epitomise the notion of *Abanyarwanda*.

Conceptualising *Abanyarwanda*: a theoretical framework

Abanyarwanda is largely centred in a vision based on some kind of aspiration more than reality, hence the notion of ‘an invented nation, a perceived political community’.¹⁶ This ‘imagined community’ relies on dramaturgical strategies, which are employed to facilitate the construction of a sense of national belonging or identity. Imagining a community requires the creation of a bigger identity beyond one’s ethnic group, hence the position by Mwakawago that ‘the cultivation of a larger consciousness requires the popularization of concepts that cut across narrow ethnic and parochial considerations’.¹⁷

Rhetorical calls for unity and oneness among disparate groups in nation-states are not peculiar to Rwanda. Historically, national leaders have advocated the notion of an ‘imagined community’ as a way of promoting cohesiveness in ethnically or racially divided communities.¹⁸ Kaiser analyses how the concept of ‘imagined community’ was evoked in Tanzania by presenting multi-culturalism as a solution to the problem of sub-national identities, which has emerged as a result of economic and political reforms.¹⁹ President Julius Nyerere promoted nationalism in Tanzania in an attempt to proffer an ‘imagined community’ as a solution for the challenge of consolidating democracy and independence in the new nation-state. To do this, he created, through the Tanganyika National African Union and the concept of *ujamaa*, a ‘supra-tribal national movement’ or ‘meta-ethnic identity’, which would unite the people of Tanganyika in the pursuit of a common goal.²⁰ *Ujamaa*, which means family-hood when translated directly, helped Nyerere to propound a form of post-colonial morality that allowed for the articulation of a national narrative. In addition, Swahili was proposed as a national language in addition to the local language.

Nyerere did not seek to eliminate ethnic differences but sought to create a super form of national identity, which would supersede ethnic, religious and linguistic differences. Creating a sense of ‘imagined community’ was imperative for post-independent united Tanzania, a reality given the country’s multi-lingual, multicultural and multi-religious characteristics. An imagined national identity has been conceived by past and current leaders as a way of dissuading populations from considering ethnicity as the primary or only frame of reference.²¹ Most observers contend that the idea of one nation largely worked in Tanzania, as they observe that the primary reference point for Tanzanians is that of members of a nation instead of an ethnic community.²²

In South Africa, for example, the concept of the ‘rainbow nation’ is reminiscent of Anderson’s language of an ‘imagined community,’ in which South Africans of all races are cumulatively said to be the replica of a multicoloured society. The phrase, ‘rainbow

nation' was coined to refer to the 'inclusive human community' emerging at the end of the apartheid era.²³ The assumption was that this 'rainbow nation' would facilitate the building of a new South African nation, which is based on the assumption that this new nation embraces a new South African national identity and national culture.²⁴ Consequently, South African political elites, sport fraternities, the media and tourism industries cumulatively highlight the notion of South Africans being contented with their cultural, spatial and racial differences. Nowhere was this concept of a 'rainbow nation' or 'South Africanness' more epitomised than during the recent football World Cup, which was hosted by South Africa in 2010. In the South African context, the 'melting pot' hypothesis applies, in which diversity, heterogeneity and hybridity of cultures are viewed as enriching.²⁵ Hall posits that no matter how different South Africans are with respect to class, gender, race and other variables, the quest for a national culture and consequent creation of a national identity will unify the disparate nation.²⁶

Nonetheless, Tshawane argues that the concept of a 'rainbow nation' in South Africa is a myth, which creates a false sense of national identity, especially in the context of massive socio-economic differences among racial groups.²⁷ 'The rainbow nation metaphor is thus a diversion that artificially prioritises the importance and acceptance of racial diversity to mask the differences in power and wealth.'²⁸ Tshawane argues that the 'rainbow nation' is difficult to fathom because of the apartheid legacy, which left a trail of 'broken communities, poverty and a culture of violence that continue to pose serious problems.'²⁹ However, the difference between South Africa's concept of 'rainbow nation' and the '*Abanyarwanda*' concept is that the former acknowledges and celebrates diversity, while the latter superimposes elements of 'oneness' on dissimilar characteristics, such as being Hutu, Tutsi and Twa.

Theorising the Rwandan case: *Abanyarwanda* and post-structural analysis

This chapter employs a post-structural analysis to examine Rwanda's strategies of addressing ethno-politics, in the context of its shattered past. Post-structuralism is a huge and diverse set of theories that has been used in political and development analysis to examine the dispensation of knowledge, power and use of information. Post-structuralism belongs to sociological and political science theory where the relationship between state and society is central.³⁰ The theory discusses issues relating to the production, reproduction and control of meaning, providing a useful analytic lens for understanding political life, particularly in post-conflict societies such as Rwanda.³¹

Post-structuralism theory embarks on a deconstructive approach to social reality by examining notions of knowledge. Post-structuralism scholars such as Lyotard hold that perceptions, vantage points as well as cultural, ideological and value predispositions determine our observations of the world.³² Since the notion of *Abanyarwanda* is a particular discourse espoused by the Rwandan government, the discourse analysis framework would be relevant in examining how narratives of unity and reconciliation re-define interaction among different groups.

Post-structuralism rejects meta-narratives in preference of more minority as well as multiple discourses.³³ Post-structuralism is useful when examining nationalism, state-building and conflict resolution, especially in the context of a postcolonial and post-conflict African state where reality is often determined by the powerful. Post-structuralism furthers an analysis of the relationship between social structure and political agency because it immediately denies any suggestions of the existence of boundaries between the state and society. Post-structuralism seeks to advance other voices within the conundrum of an emerging post-conflict society.

Derrida's deconstruction thesis allows scholars to analyse the social construction of reality and the implications of power for social relations. A post-structuralist Derridian analysis, which was furthered by Cherryholmes, demands that when utterances about *Abanyarwanda* are made, scholars should examine, among others, issues about who is authorised to speak, what can be said, what remains unsaid, what utterances are rewarded and what utterances are penalised.³⁴ Furthermore, Cherryholmes also suggests that any post-structuralist analysis should examine how socio-political arrangements reward and punish statements.

An anthropologist, Scott uses the deconstruction approach to analyse power, domination and resistance.³⁵ Analysing the interaction between the state and poor people in the context of oppressive labour regimes in South-east Asia, Scott demystified the notion of power, presenting other versions of power, including soft power.³⁶ In his several works, Scott discusses what he labels 'hidden transcripts of power' and 'infra-politics of the powerless' and 'weapons of the weak' to explain this alternative power.³⁷ Ultimately, Scott recommends analysis of the 'cryptic and opaque' aspects of social and political reality.³⁸ Scott's analysis provides an entry point to understand how the Rwandan state negotiates power with the citizens by promoting the notion of *Abanyarwanda*.

Malkki presents the concept of 'structural invisibility'.³⁹ In her analysis of ethnic relations among refugees in Tanzania, she emphasises the need to '... look beyond what we expect to see, and what we are conditioned to see' because more often, states hide their intentions in flamboyant policies and programmes. Malkki suggests that it is important to deconstruct how the nation-state orders citizens through various institutions, including local associations, government bodies and universities. Using a post-structural analytic lens helps to clarify the nature of political life, particularly in post-conflict Rwanda.⁴⁰ Uvin observes that studies of Rwanda and the genocide have been primarily 'top-down' in approach to the neglect of 'local-level research and analysis of the micro-level processes at work in smaller communities'.⁴¹ Given this reality, a post-structural theoretical framework is quite useful in this case because it allows the author to examine political narratives in post-genocide Rwanda to determine how local people live their peace.

Ingalere debunks the notion about 'Rwanda for all Rwandans', using post-structural lenses and asserting that the Rwandan state constructs and controls

discourse in the country.⁴² Pottier also observes how Rwanda's political leaders focus on maintaining a certain image, which should be shared with the rest of the world.⁴³ That image often speaks of the glowing success of Rwanda. A March 2012 report produced by a government entity, the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC), concludes that Rwanda has made significant progress in promoting unity and reconciliation. The report is an outcome of a Rwanda Reconciliation Barometer Research project, which was conducted in 2010. The report further indicates that today, 98 per cent of Rwandans are proud of being citizens of the country, highlighting that they prefer being identified as Rwandans rather than as Hutu, Tutsi or Twa. While this conclusion could be true to a certain extent, this glorification of reality ends up creating what Ingalere labels 'a preferred image of the country.'⁴⁴ Reyntjens observes that in Rwanda, there are a lot of 'cosmetic operations for international consumption'; de Lame labels these performances 'rehearsed consensus', meant to create a specific image of Rwanda.⁴⁵ Buckley-Zistel adds that, 'Pretending peace is a common, and widely accepted, practice in Rwanda'.⁴⁶ Ingalere refers to these processes as a form of 'window dressing' rather than 'real developments'.⁴⁷

Webley makes the case that the Rwandan government has political monopoly over the discourse of reconciliation. Given the foregoing, this chapter seeks alternative perspectives on Rwanda's reconciliation narratives by examining how the concept of *Abanyarwanda* is epitomised by the government and lived by the people.⁴⁸ The post-structural theoretical framework adopted in this chapter adopts a strategy of 'decentring knowledge' by analysing political reality in post-genocide Rwanda as experienced by all actors, not just government institutions.⁴⁹

Operationalising *Abanyarwanda*: the reality

To a certain extent, evoking a sense of nationhood in Rwanda has helped in calls for unity and to create a post-genocide society where people can live their lives free from fear of resurgence of attacks. Drumbl discusses three categories of post-genocide societies: homogenous, dualist, and pluralist.⁵⁰ The author posits that Rwanda constitutes a dualist post-genocide society because groups, victims and oppressors have managed to coexist within the same nation-state, living in the same territory. In post-genocide Rwanda, all ethnic groups share the same culture and participate in the same socio-economic and political activities.

The reconciliation agenda is facilitated by a government agency, the NURC, which was established in 1999. NURC underscores the principle of 'one Rwanda for all Rwandans', while denouncing initiatives that seem to promote one ethnic group over another. Such acts are often labelled as 'divisionism'.⁵¹ Since its inception, NURC has organised consultations, training and studies on the themes of unity and reconciliation in various communities. The creation of NURC and its subsequent widespread outreach processes in Rwanda are a clear demonstration of the prominence and eminence attached to the theme of reconciliation by the government of Rwanda. The

government tries to prevent a repetition of the 1994 genocide, hence the slogan ‘never again.’ According to Lermachand, the Rwandan government’s quest for *Abanyarwanda* is informed by the need to build a nation in which ethnic labels will not exist. Lacey says that the logic of the argument is: ‘if awareness of ethnic differences can be learned, so too can the idea that ethnicity does not exist.’⁵²

However, to a large extent, the notion of *Abanyarwanda* has been suspect. Most scholars view it as an attempt to delete identity, or a form of ‘de-ethnicisation’ in the new nation-building project in Rwanda. In 2001, the government of Rwanda criminalised the use of ethnic labels, ‘Hutu,’ ‘Tutsi’ and ‘Twa’, as these were perceived as promoting divisionism. Zorbas, Gakusi and Mouser and Purdeková and Lermachand express reservations about this.⁵³ Reyntjens dismisses the notion of one-ness, asserting that this ‘political discourse opposed to ethnism attempts to hide the domination of society by the self-proclaimed representatives of the Tutsi community’.⁵⁴ Tiemessen notes, however, that the Tutsis still wield considerable political power.⁵⁵ It is difficult to find exact information about ethnic composition in government because of the daunting task of asking questions about ethnic representation in politics. Lermachand observes what she labels the ‘Tutsification’ of power in the cabinet, judiciary, economy and educational circles.⁵⁶ The ‘one Rwanda for all Rwandans’ slogan does not seem to include everyone in the discussions about Rwanda’s socio-economic and political future. In particular, those accused of committing acts of genocide, as well as those ‘oppositional’ groups defined as seeking to promote the ‘ideology of genocide’ are tacitly excluded from such forums.⁵⁷ Any individual or group that criticises the government is regarded as seeking to ‘disunite’ the Rwandan people and is often silenced.

Lermachand and Thompson criticise attempts to obliterate the past by erasing ethnic identities.⁵⁸ However, the current Rwandan government has sold this approach as a necessary step towards reconciliation and unification in a society scarred by the trauma of genocide. Thomson is sceptical about this notion of ‘one Rwanda for all Rwandans’, arguing that the wiping away ethnicity is a naïve process, which assumes that not discussing ethnicity is synonymous with resolving ethnic tensions.⁵⁹ Gakusi and Mouser argue that the references to the notion of *Abanyarwanda* are a reflection of the RPF’s efforts to instrumentalise history and to mask a ‘tutsification of power in Rwanda.’⁶⁰

Political activist and chair of the United Democratic Forces (UDF), a coalition of opposition parties in Rwanda, Victorie Ingabire, sums this up in her statement which she made in captivity in May 2010:

In Rwanda, people are afraid of discussing openly the current ethnic problem. To attest that the Rwandan population is composed of three ethnic groups is neither a crime nor a problem. The problem is to be deprived of your fundamental rights simply because you are Tutsi, Hutu, or Twa. It does not make sense to allege that there are no ethnic groups in Rwanda while we all know that Tutsis were decimated simply because of their ethnicity and were slaughtered because they were Tutsis.⁶¹

Ingabire, who was detained in January 2010, is accused of propagating ethnic hatred, fomenting insecurity, denying the 1994 genocide and perpetrating 'genocide revisionism.'⁶² These charges, which call for a 30-year sentence if one is found guilty, stem from Ingabire's constant challenging of the Rwandan government to allow ethnic debates to take place in the post-conflict nation. Among others, Ingabire posits that outstanding ethnic issues in Rwanda must be addressed to forge sustainable peace, true reconciliation and lasting stability. Ingabire has challenged the Rwandan government to acknowledge that while the 1994 genocide was horrendous, Hutus were also massacred in the 1990s.

Furthermore, Ingabire has been known to challenge the Rwandan government to recognise that some Hutu are also survivors of the 1994 genocide, which is currently labelled as genocide of the Tutsis under the 2008 Constitution. Furthermore, Ingabire has been known to challenge Rwandans to debate the current ethnic make-up of government, proposing power sharing between the different ethnic groups in Rwanda. There have been mixed reactions to Ingabire's calls, with some, especially genocide survivor groups, accusing her of fuelling ethnic hatred while others in the opposition camp and human rights realm endorse her calls for freedom of speech in Rwanda, especially because discussion of ethnicity in government is officially taboo. Amnesty International has been critical of the way the case of Ingabire has been dealt with by the state, calling this an affront to human rights and a reflection of broader trends of repression and oppression in contemporary Rwanda. At the time of writing this chapter, Ingabire was still incarcerated and awaiting trial, and she alleged that these charges were fabricated and politically motivated, especially since she was detained in advance of the August 2010 presidential elections in which the incumbent, Paul Kagame, was re-elected with 93 per cent of the popular vote.

Mamdani is cynical of the dominant narrative about the collective Rwandan identity.⁶³ He advances the argument that dropping the ethnicity label has not resolved Rwanda's ethnic problems, but has rather initiated more dangerous labels, which are based on the 'genocide framework.' Such new labels in Rwanda include 'victims,' 'survivors,' and 'perpetrators'. Mamdani argues that the 'victims' and 'survivors' are portrayed as mostly Tutsis or moderate Hutus. Survivors are only Tutsis, the argument being that the genocide was aimed at Tutsis. Any Tutsi who was in Rwanda at the time of the genocide is labelled a survivor. However, Hutus who were in Rwanda during the genocide are not labelled survivors. Perpetrators are Hutus who participated actively or passively in the genocide. Zorbas concurs with Mamdani, arguing that the so-called non-ethnic labels are not necessarily neutral, but are in fact value-laden and carry with them political assumptions about who is guilty.⁶⁴

Despite calls for unity and reconciliation, the authoritarian tendency of the state has not escaped the notice of many observers. Purdeková analyses the *ingandos* (solidarity camps), which were set up by the Rwandan government to teach participants the concept of 'oneness', and observes that these *ingandos* are characterised by

indoctrination rather than a sense of community-building. In fact, in a report assessing Rwanda's governance under the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the conclusion was that Rwanda's representatives, civil society and community members espoused a 'rehearsed participation in public affairs'.⁶⁵ There is a sense of government's encroachment into civic freedoms, hence the concept of the 'presence of the invisible in the visible'.⁶⁶ Ingalere qualifies this observation by highlighting that 'the fact that the state apparatus functions as a well-oiled machine results in the omnipresence of its ears and eyes and substantial control over what can and cannot be studied'.⁶⁷

Given this background, Buckley-Zistel dismisses notions of *Abanyarwanda*, arguing they are reminiscent of 'ethnic amnesia' rather than unity and reconciliation. Lermachand says Rwandan people do not necessarily have a choice but to accept the 'ethnic amnesia' that is imposed upon them by the government, as the Rwandan political elite promotes a unifying official memory, which is expected to bring the disparate Rwandan ethnic groups towards national reconciliation.⁶⁸ Doughty argues that officialising reconciliation has a tendency of creating politicised healing without addressing personal needs.⁶⁹ The narrative of reconciliation has become a daily narrative for Rwandan people, and it is exhibited everywhere, including sports, arts and entertainment.

Furthermore, the *Abanyarwanda* concept has a homogenising effect due to the government's negation of dissent. Currently, it is impossible in Rwanda to have candid dialogues about ethnic differences, inequality and privileges for fear of being accused of 'ethnic divisionism'. The narrative on reconciliation is often accompanied by subtle sanctions on what can and cannot be said publicly.⁷⁰ In this environment, it is difficult to express an opinion that differs from government policy and logic. Political reconciliation has often been accompanied by the closure of public social space, diminishing civic liberties and the eradication of civil society.⁷¹ Doughty asserts that the government narrative on reconciliation does not invite contestation and has instead constrained opposition, accusing those who differ of divisionism.⁷² Ultimately, the reconciliation agenda has been dominated by the RPF government, with citizens embracing the regime for fear of another outbreak of genocide, should the strong state disappear.

From the foregoing, *Abanyarwanda* can be viewed as one of the hegemonic and privileged meta-narratives.⁷³ Lermachand views the notion of oneness as a façade that camouflages the political intentions of the Rwandan government.⁷⁴ She concludes that the reconciliation project has been accompanied by the 'imposition of an official memory, purged of ethnic references', which unfortunately 'masks the brutal realities of ethnic discrimination'. Thompson further adds that such a concept and practice 'institutionalizes a mode of thought control profoundly antithetical to any kind of inter-ethnic dialogue aimed at recognition and forgiveness'. Critics of the Paul Kagame regime observe that in reality the struggle for political survival precedes any serious effort to achieve true reconciliation in Rwanda. Mgbako posits that the Rwandan government uses charges of 'genocidal ideology' and 'ethnic divisionism' to attack independent

critics and opposition.⁷⁵ As a result of the fear of a *genocidaire* label, many people in the country are afraid of expressing different opinions. The National Reconciliation Commission views the population's placated attitude as 'a sign that obedience is part of Rwanda's political culture'.⁷⁶

There are reports that many independent critics continue to flee the country as a result of the political restrictions. In 2003 a parliamentary commission issued a report accusing some civil society organisations, independent journalists, opposition politicians, human rights defenders and international aid organisations of harbouring 'genocidal ideology'. In 2008, the Rwandan government banned Alison Des Forges, a renowned human rights defender working with Human Rights Watch. In 2010, the Rwandan government banned two independent newspapers, *Umuwugizi* and *Umuseso*. Because of developments such as these, Mgbako states that the RPF government is manipulating and politicising the memory of the genocide. Mgbako is also critical of the lack of '... enlightened public discourse about the social construction of ethnicity in Rwanda' and concludes that the government oppresses alternative political viewpoints under the pretence of advancing national unity.⁷⁷

Wyss refuses to acknowledge that Rwanda is now unified. The author cites land conflict as one of the factors threatening the fragile social equilibrium.⁷⁸ Pottier (2002:202) dismisses the notion of 'one Rwanda' as an idealised concept that glosses over the complexities of everyday Rwanda. Reyntjens (2004) is wary of state-publicised notions of unity, which do not necessarily reflect the day-to-day lived experiences of local people. Despite 53 per cent of members of parliament being women, political power in Rwanda is still concentrated in the hands of a Tutsi-dominated, English-speaking political elite.

The discourse on national unity, espoused by the concept of *Abanyarwanda*, while it implicitly recognises survivors of the 1994 genocide who were traumatised as a result of this experience, does not seem to be inclusive enough to include others.⁷⁹ Pottier also criticises this one-dimensional understanding of the genocide in Rwanda and the post-conflict political processes, which automatically places Hutus and Tutsis into binaries of 'perpetrator' and 'survivor'.⁸⁰ In the memorialisation of the genocide, those Hutus who were also victims of injury, murder and arson are often not remembered.⁸¹ However, other scholars and the Rwandan government refute this argument by mentioning some Hutus who were recognised for their positive role during the genocide. In some quarters in Rwanda, the term 'Tutsi genocide' is used to refer to the 1994 massacres. Critics posit that labelling it 'Tutsi genocide' instead of 'Rwandan genocide' creates collective Tutsi victimisation and collective Hutu guilt.⁸²

Ultimately, operationalising the *Abanyarwanda* concept is challenging because ethnic tensions in Rwanda still exist although they are not blatantly expressed inside Rwanda. Rwandans in the diaspora who are not as politically restricted as their counterparts in the homeland often express their frustration with the status quo through social media. Other expressions of dissent are more violent. For example, in

April 2004, during the same week that the tenth anniversary of the genocide was being commemorated across Rwanda, approximately 250 Hutu rebels based in exile in the Democratic Republic of Congo attacked a village inside Rwanda's western border. In 2008, there was a bombing at the Rwandan genocide museum, which killed one guard. These events, although occurring on a small scale, still necessitate an investigation of the current reconciliation discourse in Rwanda.

Conclusion

While the concept of *Abanyarwanda* is definitely an innovative strategy to unite a nation scarred by its violent past, there is a lot more that can be done to evoke reconciliation and national unity in Rwanda. *Abanyarwanda*, both in rhetoric and in practice, has substantially managed to rally Rwandans around the calls for a united nation that is ready to confront the future. If the face of Kigali and the rate of economic growth are to be used as indicators of a nation that is forging ahead, then it would be easy to conclude that *Abanyarwanda* is succeeding in harnessing the positive energies of Rwandans. However, contemporary Rwanda is still a traumatised society and notions of oneness have not successfully addressed the still existing yet very much camouflaged divisions between ethnic groups, between returnees and those who stayed and faced the wrath of genocide and between the rich and the poor. To transcend these divisions, Rwandan society needs to go beyond mystical calls of a united nation to implement integrative strategies of development, promote democratic and free political discourse and allow people to discuss ethnicity in a safe and open manner.

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Introduction

The *gacaca* courts are community-based dispute-resolution tribunals, which were employed in pre-colonial Rwanda to deal with minor infractions such as inheritance, civil liability, theft and conjugal matters. Research has shown that *gacaca* was also used in conflicts amounting to criminal offences such as theft and adultery.¹ Unwritten indigenous Rwandan law guided its organisation, composition and sentencing methods. One thing that became apparent after the arrival of the Germans in the territory in 1884 was that *gacaca* was headed by a reputed sage who commanded respect and esteem in his neighbourhood.²

The 1994 genocide provided few legal options for the new Rwandan government to provide adequate and acceptable legal structures for the speedy trial of the more than 130 000 genocide suspects and perpetrators. Within the prism of such understanding, it was suggested that the current legal structures and manpower would not be able to ensure just and acceptable trials within the ambit of the law. The obligation was therefore to come up with an alternative legal framework, of which the mechanism, its structures and workability were familiar to the Hutu, Tutsi and other components of Rwandan society. Many proponents of the *gacaca*, including President Kagame, have argued that the *gacaca* has traditionally invited the respect and support of the population and they have considered the process and its outcome legitimate. Admittedly, therefore, the Rwandan government considers the process as a useful mechanism for the administration of popular justice and citizens' participation in the collective governance of the country.

The originality of the *gacaca* concept as an alternative to the ancient Roman legal system has caught the attention of many observers of the African political scene. Some have even contested its applicability within the wider concept of multi-ethnic Rwanda and have contested its chronological development after July 1994. According to Danielle Tully, the originality of the concept was contained in the recommendation of an international conference on 'Genocide, Impunity and Accountability' in November 1995 in Kigali. The conference recommended that the Rwandan government create new mechanisms to deal with genocide cases and create a unique scheme aimed at encouraging offenders to confess their acts of violence in exchange for substantially reduced sentences.³

In pursuance of such recommendations, the Rwandan constitutional court approved Organic Law 8/96 on the organisation of prosecutions for offences constituting the crime of genocide or crimes against humanity since 1 October 1990. The Organic Law established four categories of genocide suspects. Category 1 includes planners, organisers, instigators and leaders of genocide. Category 2 comprises perpetrators of, or accomplices to, intentional homicide or serious assaults that resulted in death. Category 3 includes those who seriously assaulted others without causing death. Finally, category 4 suspects are those who committed offences against property.⁴

The Organic Law instituted a plea bargain procedure that would allow those who confessed according to the law and provided evidence against other suspects to receive a considerable reduction in penalty.⁵ With the caseload of the perpetrators far from nearing completion point, the government passed the Criminal Procedure Code, Organic Law 9/96 relating to provisional modifications to Organic Law 8/96. Arguably, the modifications were aimed at accelerating datelines for the prosecution of genocide suspects and perpetrators. Despite such gigantic legal reforms aimed at accelerating the trial process, by the end of 1999 very little progress had been made to fast-track the judicial process of the detainees. In response to pressure from donor agencies and human rights activists, Rwandan president Pasteur Bizimungu established a commission chaired by the Minister of Justice to look at possible mechanisms for increasing public participation in the judicial proceedings. The commission published an official document detailing a proposal for *gacaca* tribunals on 8 June 1999.⁶

The recommendations of the commission were widely received and on 12 October 2000 the Transitional National Assembly adopted a law on the creation of *gacaca* courts. Law no. 40/2000 (Organic Law 8/96) was passed with regard to the categorisation of the suspects, but would only have jurisdiction over category 2, 3 and 4 cases; category 1 cases were referred to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Arusha, Tanzania. At this initial stage of the process, *gacaca* was limited to the collection of information at the local level in order to update the files of those who had been accused and imprisoned and those whose files could not be traced, commonly called *les sans dossier*, and in addition, to acquire new information that had not been made known or documented by legal institutions.⁷ One of the unforeseen exigencies that the *gacaca* administrators ignored in the planning phase was the cumbersome nature of gathering preliminary evidence in the trial and prosecution of these alleged perpetrators. To fast-track the evidence-gathering process, judges were elected to supervise and provide leadership in the process. The 19 *Inyangamugayo* or judges represented the various socio-economic backgrounds of the people in the village. At this stage of the process, there was wide publicity and women generally constituted the majority of those who presented their candidature for election.⁸

The gigantic nature of the process necessitated the reorganisation and restructuring of the evidence-gathering process, which was unevenly structured throughout the entire country. The 2001 *gacaca* amendment laws created the *cellule*, which was the seat of the

village *gacaca* structure. The information-collection process was similarly modified to accommodate and check for excesses and balance. The collection process at the *cellule* was divided into six sessions, at which at least 100 people from the village had to be present to constitute a quorum. The first session was generally dedicated to selling the *gacaca* concept as a conflict-resolution structure. The second session resolved to gather the opinion of the people on key concepts concerning its functioning and sentencing procedures. The third and fourth sessions were usually dedicated to the establishment of the list of those killed in the village and its surroundings. The fifth session focused on drawing the inventory of physical damage and the last focused on establishing lists of those accused of genocide crimes. The last sessions were also destined to present to the victims and perpetrators their rights and obligations vis à vis the state and the victims.⁹

One noticeable omission of the *gacaca* was its non-collaborative attitude to relevant institutions both inside and outside the country to enable its proceedings to be in line with international conventions and protocol to which Rwanda is signatory. Many argued that, though the *gacaca* trials are a government-driven process, they base their success and level of acceptance on the input of civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in the field. On several occasions, the NGOs have been labelled as opposing government policies in the field of political and judicial reforms. This uncomfortable relationship could partly be blamed for the adversarial relationship between civil society and the government. In Africa, most NGOs and community-based organisations are frequently viewed as opposed to the government. This trend of thinking has arguably gained ground with the emergence of public opinion as an important tool in shaping policy formulation on the continent after 1990. This necessitated some changes to the *gacaca* Act. The 2004 *gacaca* Amendment recognised the threat posed by 19 judges in a *gacaca* sitting. The 2004 Act reduced the number of judges from 19 to nine, with five deputies. The information-gathering process was also re-structured, with one person covering a radius of 10 houses rather than the general assembly investigating the village, as was the case in the previous legislation. Genocidal crimes were reclassified to accommodate only three of the 2001 four categories. Another significant amendment was the requirement for victims of rape to choose a judge from the elected nine to listen to her complaints. The 2004 categorisation put rape crimes into category 1 offences that could only be prosecuted by the Rwanda public prosecution authority.¹⁰

Generally, the *gacaca* courts are divided into three levels with distinct competencies. The *gacaca* court of the *cellule* is the lowest level in the *gacaca* courts hierarchy, which sits at the village level. Its primary function is to receive confessions and guilty pleas, to investigate cases and to try people accused in the third category. The *gacaca* court of the sector is comprised of inhabitants in the same neighbourhood or *colline* (hill). Meetings are usually convened by a member of the sector. This member's duties include investigations of testimonies, receiving confessions and guilty pleas and examining appeals against judgments passed by the *gacaca* court of the *cellule*. The last category is the *gacaca* court of appeal, which meets when an appeal hearing had been lodged

against the lower courts. The appeal court investigates testimonies and examines rulings on appeal made by the *gacaca* court of the sector. It hears cases forwarded to it by the ICTR and the Rwandan public prosecuting authority.

Conceptualising transitional justice in Africa

There is a general understanding among African philosophers that African philosophy, as accepted by philosophers in Africa, is still in its embryonic stage. Debate centres on the fact that African philosophy is yet to establish not only one tradition, but several such traditions on the continent.¹¹ The question of traditions was addressed by Oruka in 1983 when he argued that the idea is to let ‘one hundred flowers flourish’ so as to create traditions, but also to promote debates, critical analyses and self-criticism when handling complex issues in contemporary Africa that are amenable to philosophic solutions.¹² The general consensus on the matter is that a good number of traditions in African philosophy should emerge so as to make possible debates and critical and constructive analyses so that issues such as authoritarianism, anachronism and supernaturalism, which have bedevilled most African cultures, can be addressed. This broad understanding in the study of African philosophy was undertaken partly to falsify certain theses, such as that propagated by Levy-Bruhl that assumed that Africans south of the Sahara are incapable of evolving a scientific and reason-oriented culture.¹³

This anomaly motivated several African philosophers to ask the question: What is African philosophy? The answers have been varied, but four principal concepts have been mentioned. These include 1) ethno-philosophy, 2) philosophic sagacity, 3) nationalistic-ideological philosophy, and 4) professional philosophy. Ethno-philosophy conceives of African philosophy as a description and as communal thought as opposed to a body of logically argued thoughts of individuals.¹⁴ Ethno-philosophy is based on the assumption that there is a metaphysical system and an ideology embodied in the traditional wisdom, the institutions and languages of Africa. It strives to present the African approach to the world. Nationalistic-ideological philosophy is a unique African thought process that is based on traditional African socialism, familyhood or a communitarian principle.¹⁵ The work of African elites, such as Kwame Nkrumah’s socialism, Julius Nyerere’s Ujamaa and Leopold Senghor’s negritude, is in line with this form of African thought. The fact that African leaders subscribe to the notion that their political agendas are not capitalist, socialist or communist, attests to this unique African political philosophy. Though this system has its own drawbacks, many on the continent still believe that it is a good point of departure for any serious study or work in African communities.

However, despite the suitability of the above concepts in the study of African philosophy, the study will be based on the philosophic sagacity concept as propagated by Didier Kaphagawani. Philosophic sagacity is non-holistic; it underscores the thoughts of individuals in a community. The task of this important aspect of African philosophy is to:

Identify men in the society who are reputed for their wisdom with the view of demonstrating that literacy is not a necessary condition for philosophical reflection and exposition and that there exists in Africa critical and independent thinkers who guide their thoughts and judgements by their power of reason and inborn insight rather than by authority of communal consensus.¹⁶

In most traditional African philosophy, before sages can be judged worthy of instruction in the deep knowledge of their culture, their moral conduct must be scrutinised by competent elders. Such scrutiny at times goes beyond gauging the sages' exceptional wisdom to examine their spirituality as well, so that such gifts can be employed for the betterment of his/her community.¹⁷ Several studies on sages by Oruka in the Luoland of Kenya, Sodipo in Nigeria and Griaule in Senegal demonstrated that rational thinking is a permanent feature of traditional Africa, not something brought to the continent by European colonisers.¹⁸ Griaule's study of sages among the Dogon reveals a cosmogony, metaphysics and a religion that put them on a par with any other civilisation in the world. Sodipo's writings are also motivated by the desire to challenge the stereotype of the uncritical, unreflective, closed nature of African systems of thought.¹⁹

One important question about sage philosophy that has not been properly addressed is to determine whether someone can be a sage and be Western-educated at the same time. Some of the literature intimated that sages can be drawn from all components of society in as much as they demonstrate exceptional wisdom for the betterment of their community. Sagacity philosophy in most part fails to identify the authorship of this counsel. In ethno-philosophy the knowledge dispensed is community knowledge; the same cannot be said of sagacity philosophy. Most of what sages dispense is cultural anecdotes that must belong to the community. As a result, Oruka attributes much of the final product to the sages.²⁰

On the other hand, the study is also based on the transitional justice framework in post-genocide Rwanda. Transitional justice can be broadly conceptualised into two categories – retributive and restorative justice systems. Each of these concepts of justice takes into account the need to address both psychological and legal factors pertaining to genocide or crimes against humanity, but pursue these goals in different ways and reflect different priorities. Over the years, there has been a lot of optimism about the role of transitional justice in moralising and reconciling a hitherto fractured past. In Africa, for example, the traditional method of conflict resolution has taken precedence over Western methods of legal mitigation. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa has been hailed as the most successful post-conflict transitional truth-telling and reconciliation initiative in the world. The *gacaca* community justice process in Rwanda has registered great success in prosecuting *genocidaires* over the past years. In Uganda, the *Oput oti* traditional method of conflict resolution has been supported and put forward by the elders of the northern region of Uganda as the preferred method to resolve the over 20 years of armed conflict between the government and the Lord's

Resistance Army. An overview of a transitional justice framework in Africa would therefore suggest a leaning towards the African methods of conflict resolution. These methods encompass both retributive and restorative elements that are contained in mainstream conflict resolution parlance. In some instances African methods prescribe complete amnesty.

The restorative transitional justice framework addresses the hurts and needs of both victims and offenders in a reconciliatory and adaptive framework. Batley argues that though there are several definitions of restorative justice, any worthwhile definition should contain three general principles. First, crime should be seen as something that causes injury to victims, offenders and communities. Secondly he suggests that not only government, but also victims, offenders and their communities should be actively involved in the criminal justice process at the earliest point and to the maximum extent possible.²¹ Lastly, he argues that in promoting justice, the government is responsible for preserving order and the community is responsible for establishing peace.²² Restorative justice therefore seeks to promote accountability of offenders and can bring about rehabilitative healing and reintegration in a hitherto fractured society. In trying to ascertain whether a judicial process is restorative enough, Batley discusses certain determinants. Prominent among them will be: Does the process address harms and causes? Is it victim-oriented? Are offenders encouraged to take responsibility? Are all three stakeholder groups involved (government, victims, offenders)? Is there an opportunity for dialogue and participatory decision-making? Is it respectful to all parties?²³ An exploration into the questions posed will determine whether an initiative is restorative and whether it holds the prospect of healing. In most transitional justice frameworks on the continent, such questions are scarcely answered.

Retributive transitional justice, a common feature in the structure of the transitional justice framework on the continent, holds the perpetrators of past abuses accountable by punishing them for their crimes. Retributive justice, unlike restorative justice, is offender-focused and provides the basis for a system of rule of law.²⁴ Kauffman argues that retributive justice in a transitional society helps establish basic principles of the rule of law, which reaffirm that all individuals who commit abuses will be held accountable and serve as a deterrent for future abuses. Though transitional justice focuses on the individual, criminal processes within such a framework help to demarcate the important point that all the members of an ethnic group do not commit crimes and thus identify and persecute specific individuals.²⁵ This is particularly important in the *gacaca* community justice process, which in the past had accused a majority of Hutu in Rwanda of having taken part in the genocide of 1994.

Operational, categorisation and sentencing procedures in the *gacaca* courts

The *gacaca* courts inherited the administrative make-up of the country, in other words, *gacaca* courts are situated at every administrative unit of the country. At the *cellule* level, the general assembly of the *gacaca* is made up of all the inhabitants of the village who are

18 years and older. The assembly then proceeds to elect nine people of high integrity as *Inyangamugayo* (wise men) to act as judges. Five delegates are elected from the nine judges to represent the *cellule* at the *secteur* level. At the level of the *secteur*, five delegates from the general assembly are elected to represent the *secteur* at the commune level. The commune in turn elects another five delegates to the prefecture level.²⁶ As earlier indicated, the *gacaca* jurisdictions have competence only over category 2 and 3 of the amended *gacaca* laws of 2004.

The sentencing procedures of the *gacaca* jurisdictions follow the sentencing guidelines established by Organic Law 8/96 of 1996. Individuals convicted of category 3 offences will be made to either repair the damage they caused the victim or carry out community service that is equivalent to the restitution owed. Those convicted of category 2 offences will receive a combination sentence of prison time and community service or public work. As confession was the cornerstone of the success of the exercise, those who enter a guilty plea-bargain with the jurisdictions will receive sentences between five to seven years, with half the sentence to be served in prison. Category 2 suspects who do not avail themselves of the confession and guilty plea procedure will receive prison sentences from 25 years to life imprisonment. Similarly, those who use this opportunity after an indictment has been issued will serve between 12 and 15 years, with half the sentence in prison.²⁷

Prior to 1994, there were no genocide laws in Rwanda. It is against this background that the first *gacaca* Organic Law was passed on 30 August 1996. Organic Law 08/96 established the organisation and prosecution of offences constituting crimes of genocide and other genocide-related offences. Law 08/96 establishes the specialised chambers for genocide crimes in the civil and military courts. It also fixes confession procedure and the guilty plea for genocide suspects and it establishes the categorisation of genocide defendants. The categorisation of *genocidaires* into the various categories was based on the level of involvement in the planning, organisation and execution of the genocide plan. Within such understanding, the *genocidaires* were categorised as follows:

Category 1

Includes planners, organisers and instigators, supervisors of the genocide, leaders at national, provincial or district level, in political parties, the army, religious denominations or militia. The well-known murderer who distinguished himself because of the zeal that characterised him in the killing or excessive wickedness with which killings were carried out.

People who committed rape or acts of sexual torture.

Category 2

Includes authors, co-authors, accomplices of deliberate homicides, or of serious attacks that caused someone's death. The person who, with the intention of killing, caused injuries or committed other serious violence, but without actually causing death.

Category 3

Includes persons who committed criminal acts or became accomplices during serious attacks, without the intention of causing death.

Category 4

Includes persons who committed offences against property.²⁸

Figures from the pilot phase of the *gacaca* process reveal that category 1 offences constitute 11,5 per cent of all the detainees. Category 2 and 3 constitute 61,6 per cent and 26,9 per cent, respectively. Though most genocide perpetrators fell within the categorisation bracket above, some offences, such as rape, were not classified. The amended 1996 Organic Law of 26 January 2001 attempted to broaden the scope of the process by introducing the alternative penalty of community service to defendants who took recourse to the procedure of confession, guilty plea, repentance and apology. With the changing times, the *gacaca* process had to be reorganised in order to be in line with existing legislation and the unfolding of the reconciliation process in the country. It is within this thinking that Organic Law 16/2004 of 19 June 2004 was passed. One of the main features of the new law was that it brought the *gacaca* process closer to the people and established *gacaca* courts both at the cell and sector level. The various categories were reviewed and reduced from four to three. The former categories 3 and 2 were combined to make category 2, while category 4 became category 3.²⁹ The 2004 amendment recognised rape as a capital crime and gave it special status. Victims of rape were no longer required to testify in public. They were allowed to choose a judge from the bench of the *gacaca* court of the cell to whom the victim could submit her complaint verbally or in writing. The leader of the *gacaca* court of the cell forwarded the complainant's file to the public prosecutor or the main courts, as rape, according to the 2004 amendment, is a category 1 offence.

The recent amendment to the *gacaca* Organic Law provides for three levels within the *gacaca* jurisdiction, each with different competencies and sentencing procedures. The lowest level court in the *gacaca* framework is the *gacaca* court of the cell. The main duties of the *gacaca* court of the cell are to investigate, receive confessions and guilty pleas and to try those accused of crimes in the third category.³⁰ The accused of category 1 are referred to the public prosecution service or to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

The second tier of the *gacaca* court system is occupied by the *gacaca* court of the sector. A member of the *gacaca* court of the sector usually convenes meetings. This is usually to hear appeal cases from the *gacaca* court of the cell or other relevant matters referred to it by the higher courts. The *gacaca* court of the sector is the principal appeal court of the *gacaca* court of the cell. It also investigates testimonies, receives confessions, guilty pleas and information and conducts trials of defendants accused of category 2 crimes. The last echelon in the *gacaca* court's framework is the *gacaca* court of appeal. The *gacaca* court of appeal is the court of final recourse in any *gacaca* court matter.

It entertains appeals from the *gacaca* court of the sector. It interprets and analyses sentencing strategies within the *gacaca* setup.³¹

According to the 2004 reorganisation of the Organic Law, category 1 cases are tried by the Public Prosecution service of the Republic of Rwanda or the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, sitting in Arusha, Tanzania. The sentencing procedures of this category of persons are therefore subject to the internal rules and regulations governing these institutions. As for category 2 persons, defendants who refuse to confess, or plead guilty, repent and apologise or whose confession is rejected are sentenced to 25 years or life imprisonment. Similarly, those who make use of the confession process before an indictment has been issued will be liable to serve a sentence of 12 to 15 years, with half of the sentence to be served in prison and the other half by participating in a community project.³²

Category 3 offenders are made to either repair the damage or carry out community service that is equivalent to the destroyed property. Those who do not confess but enter a plea bargain will receive sentences between five and seven years, with half the sentence to be served in prison. Persons who confess prior to being placed on the list of perpetrators will have their sentence reduced to between one and three years, with only half of the sentence to be served in prison.³³

The various pieces of draft legislation of the *gacaca* process provide for appeal against the sentence in a particular case to the next administrative level. Defendants are usually given five days to file their appeal files before they have to start serving their sentence. Decisions taken at the *gacaca* court of the cell may be appealed at the *gacaca* court of the sector. In the same vein, those taken at the *gacaca* court of the sector can be appealed at the *gacaca* court of appeal. The Prosecutor General of the Supreme Court is the overall supervisor of the *gacaca* courts. On his own account or pursuant to a request, the Prosecutor General of the Supreme Court can decide to cease a case before a *gacaca* court in the interest of justice.³⁴

Interpreting *gacaca* within the sage paradigm

Because of its intricate and multifaceted nature, it is not surprising that great confusion and contestation over the objectives of the practice manifest themselves both in the critical literature and in the daily running of the *gacaca*.³⁵ The hybrid process, in many ways, masks its achievements and the critical question would therefore centre on its achievements, its effectiveness as a response to the needs of Rwandans and juxtaposing it within the ambit of the sage paradigm. Proponents of the *gacaca* system have presented a positive image of the system, arguing that Rwandans are far more reconciled than they were in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide. They argue that Rwanda is a peaceful country where the rights of its citizens are guaranteed by the constitution. This position has been attacked by critics of the *gacaca* system, who posited that the *gacaca* system does not guarantee fundamental human rights. These rights include the right to a lawyer, the right to be presumed innocent, the right to be informed of charges against

oneself, the right to be present at one's trial and to cross-examine witnesses, the right against self-incrimination and the right to be free from arbitrary arrest and detention, which are guaranteed by the Rwandan constitution and international treaties of which Rwanda is a signatory.³⁶

In 2009 the UN Human Rights Committee assessed Rwanda's compliance with its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and concluded that the *gacaca* system did not operate in accordance with basic fair trial rules.³⁷ The manner in which perpetrators of genocide are identified, the way in which information on the accused is obtained, trial and sentencing procedures also fall short of any restorative justice system. The pilot phase of the *gacaca* witnessed mass participation of people, from senior government functionaries to peasant farmers in the rural areas. However, this enthusiasm has dwindled over time and the reasons put forward by critics of the process have been the intimidation of witnesses, the use of the process to settle personal scores and the silencing of critical voices.³⁸

These critical elements of the *gacaca* are far from sage philosophical jurisprudence, which strives to create a balance between offenders and perpetrators. Sages represent an important facade of traditional African society, which colonialism has failed to unravel. *Inyamuganyu*, as sages in traditional Rwandan society were known, were expected to live exemplary lives and were imbued with traditional Rwandan customs and belief systems.³⁹ They acted as intermediary between the colonialist and the local population. Usually, they were called upon to settle disputes between and among the population such as adultery, theft, land disputes and household quarrels. However, the post-genocide judicial dispensation necessitated new thinking about justice and the *gacaca*, which has generally been presided over by a sage and seen as a vehicle to expedite the judicial process of those accused of genocide crimes. Resuscitating the *Inyamuganyu* concept in the post-genocide era, many critics of the concept have argued, is an attempt to impose a pseudo-tradi-judicial dispensation on a people who know very little about the sages concept. Many who participated in the *gacaca* process, including sages, did not know the intricate purpose which the *gacaca* set out to achieve. One of the *Inyamuganyu* interviewed by the writer said that he had been elected as an *Inyamuganyu* in a quarter in which he was not an inhabitant prior to 1994. He also indicated that he was not schooled in traditional Rwandan tradition and thus knew very little when it came to trying people under Rwandan traditional law, as the *gacaca* process was trying to achieve.⁴⁰

It is also important to recognise the influences that other social phenomena exert on *gacaca*. Firstly, *gacaca* is operating in a fluid security environment where the threats of reversing the gains of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) are clearly visible in the FDLR operations, mainly from the bushes of Eastern Congo. Secondly, the impact of social media and the rapid urbanisation the country is experiencing have eroded most of what many would call the traditional Rwandan custom of consulting a sage.

Challenges to the *gacaca* courts

Like other transitional justice paradigms on the continent, the *gacaca* process has been facing major challenges since its inception. The challenges facing the *gacaca* process are those associated with the fulfilling of the courts' mission, which among others include to disclose the truth on the genocide events, to speed up genocide trials, to eradicate the culture of impunity, to reconcile and strengthen unity among Rwandans and to prove to the world Rwanda's ability to solve its own problems.⁴¹ In the context of upholding such principles, the courts have on several occasions committed the mortal sin of apportioning the ills of the genocide to a particular ethnic group. According to several NGOs working in Rwanda, the *gacaca* courts mete out one-sided justice. Many have argued that the time bracket from 1 October 1990 to 31 December 1994 represents a period when the RPF was waging a war to oust the government of Juvenal Habyarimana. Surprisingly, the *gacaca* is yet to try a member of the RPF, despite evidence to prove that the RPF committed several war crimes on its march to Kigali.⁴² Some of the informants whom I interviewed suggested that a majority of those who committed acts of genocide were in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in France. They concurred that those in jail were victims of one-sided justice aimed at vilifying the Hutu. The *gacaca* is yet to dispel this myth of the collective guilt of the Hutu ethnic group. Many who were interviewed, including some government officials, reasoned that the one-sided nature of the *gacaca* process is perhaps its greatest challenge.

The government of Rwanda has yet to make a statement on the one-sided nature of the structure of the *gacaca* process. Though some government officials have indicated that members of the RPF who committed crimes against humanity during the civil war have been tried in Rwandan courts and military tribunals,⁴³ no evidence exists to prove this. Instead, when a French judge accused some former commandos of the RPF of having played a role in the shooting down of Habyarimana's plane, which triggered the genocide, the government responded by cutting diplomatic relations with France.⁴⁴ Though the evidence presented by the French judge, Jean Louis Brugiere, has not been tested in a court of law, the jittery reaction of the Rwandan government to the judge's indictment is cause for concern. It clearly indicates that the present government of Rwanda cannot absolve itself from all the charges levelled against it. The *gacaca* court structure has not taken into consideration NGO input in the smooth functioning of the process. Initially, it was considered that the NGOs would play a major role in the functioning of the *gacaca* process, but now NGOs and other civil society organisations need official government approval before they may attend or take part in any of the *gacaca* proceedings. To comprehend the challenges inherent in the structure of these courts and what has prevented them from discharging their duties, a careful look at their work at the local level is worthwhile.

Conclusion

Though the *gacaca* process has shunned civil society participation, the process will be more appealing and acceptable to the people from both sides of the Rwandan ethnic divide if certain of the recommendations below could be taken into consideration. During the study, the author noticed that the *gacaca* process would benefit a lot if it involved civil society and religious authorities in the pursuit of justice and reconciliation in post-genocide Rwanda. After all, these bodies have made a significant contribution in dealing with the ethnic divide in the country. Including them will therefore encourage popular and active participation of the population in the process. The study also recommends that the *gacaca* courts should remain communal as they were intended to be, without undue interference from the political elite. The interference of the political elite has discredited the communal aspect of the process. This has placed the process on a collision course with governments and other civil society organisations working at the grassroots level. The *gacaca* process should address Hutu concerns on its impartiality and unbiased disposition towards this section of Rwandan society. In this direction, the issue of the trying of RPF members involved in genocide activities should be adequately addressed and communicated to the public. The *gacaca* process should address the root causes of division and animosity in Rwanda. The government should address the security concerns of those participating in the *gacaca* process. A witness protection programme should be contemplated. Though it is expensive to run for an impoverished country such as Rwanda, a more adequate programme for the protection of witnesses should be considered. The government should provide adequate housing and probably start-up capital to those who lost everything during the genocide. The process needs to provide a formula for nation- and capacity-building in Rwandan society. The *gacaca* process should not just be another talk-shop, but should provide a sustainable peacebuilding solution for the ethnic division in the country.

The chapter argues that, though the government of Rwanda has engaged considerable financial and human resources in eradicating the culture of impunity, both a retributive and a restorative justice dispensation remains elusive. A strong argument can also be made that the elusiveness of these justice initiatives has weakened other peacebuilding efforts in Rwanda, especially the work of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission. The research also notes that the conditions that originally gave rise to the conflict in Rwanda still exist, with killings and reprisal killings witnessed in several sectors around the country and frequent grenade attacks in and around Kigali. The chapter recognises that while the suffering caused by the 1994 genocide was profound and community participation in administering justice laudable, the entire process of *gacaca* needs to be focused on the root causes of the genocide. It argues that *gacaca* goes beyond the mere tenets of justice in a hitherto fractured society, which draws on the model of African collective solidarity and communality as a problem-solving mechanism.

The chapter argues that *gacaca* is a unique African solution for an African problem and further argues that the genesis of the process can be traced to the unresolved extra-judicial wrangling that engulfed Rwanda after the 1994 genocide. Departing from Jonathan Allen's concept of a restorative justice framework, the chapter argues that *gacaca*'s mandate excludes such restorative justice tenets as elucidated above and argues that *gacaca* should strive to find a home within transitional justice structures. The entire process of *gacaca* did not provide a formula for nation- and capacity-building in Rwandan society. These salient concepts have proven vital in any reconciliation drive on the African continent. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa was an important reference point because it encapsulated most of the restorative tenets that Allen enunciated. Truth-telling occupies an important part in any reconciliation drive and this was recognised by the *gacaca*, which embedded this concept in its structures. Talking, the chapter emphasises, is an important aspect of healing in African conflict resolution. It reflects on the various aspects of transitional justice as methods of post-conflict reconstruction and argues that different types of repression necessitate and may lead to different types of accountability. Truth commissions, national conferences, committees of the disappeared etc. are forums through which past injustices in other parts of the continent have been addressed. The *gacaca* was just another way in which the perpetrators of the 1994 genocide have been called upon to account for their actions.

The chapter posits that though the *gacaca* was an age-old Rwandan tradition of conflict resolution, its reorganisation in early 2000 recognised the aspirations and wishes of the African people to apply African solutions to African problems. This is particularly important, as it recognises the importance of such an opinion on Africa's developmental thinking and impresses *gacaca* as an important instrument to drive the African renaissance paradigm. The chapter failed to identify *gacaca* as a restorative justice undertaking; a new understanding of transitional justice is needed, one which takes into account the importance of telling one's story.⁴⁵ As Borland further argues, *gacaca* offered genocide victims the chance to speak out publicly in a state-sponsored forum about the atrocities committed during the 1994 genocide, which was a great step forward in creating and sustaining peace in Rwanda. The notion of creating representation in a contested political space has spearheaded such endeavours. People, as the *gacaca* process has shown, should be seen as owning the reconciliation efforts. This is the spirit that the chapter attempts to uphold.

To test Jonathan Allen's theory of restorative justice that underpins the study, important critical issues were raised. The core function of any restorative justice undertaking is an emphasis on victim-offender reconciliation. This core attribute is lacking in the *gacaca* framework and has made the process into a way of overcoming feelings of humiliation on the part of offenders and feelings of rage and indignation on the part of victims by involving all in a constructive communal initiative.⁴⁶ Allen stresses that restorative justice should emphasise the morally transforming quality of participation in the intimate setting of any restorative justice undertaken. The *gacaca*

process, in all its embodiments departs strongly from such principles and suggests a victor-vanquished scenario, which has continuously kept Rwandan society divided. While restorative justice favours the voluntary character of the processes of restorative justice, *gacaca* compelled all Hutu to appear before the *gacaca* judges.

Because *gacaca* negates the restorative traits that other transitional justice structures have, criticism in that direction is in order. Further research should therefore focus on an appropriate inclusive transitional nomenclature which best represents the aspirations of all in a fractured society. Because *gacaca* had made the magnitude and repercussions of the 1994 genocide evident, there is an urgent need to find solutions; *gacaca* however, still stands out as an important landmark on the road to a just and equitable Rwandan society. In order to foster sustainable peacebuilding, we can build on the strengths of the *gacaca* model, especially the importance of survivors and even perpetrators telling their stories.

Policy recommendations

- The *gacaca* jurisdictions were a dynamic hybrid process, which generally achieved some of the objectives set initially. It is, however, important that the Ministry of Justice should institute legislation that will allow conventional courts to review serious cases of injustices alleged to have occurred during the *gacaca*.
- It is strongly recommended that the final report of the *gacaca* courts should be made public and that new genocide-related cases should be tried by the conventional courts.
- It is equally important that convicted prisoners and persons participating in community service be released as soon as their sentence has been served and due compensation should be considered for those not released on time.⁴⁷
- In order to avoid impunity and to ensure redress, the government should order credible investigations and prosecution of members of the RPF who committed acts of genocide and crimes against humanity.
- It is also important that the government should verify that no person has been prosecuted twice for the same offence and ensure that action is taken against persons who falsely accuse others.
- It must be ensured that the *gacaca* archives are available to the general public in a comprehensive and easily accessible format.⁴⁸

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10

Chapter

Conflict resolution, land disputes and peace-building in northern Tanzania: the role of customary institutions

Mara Goldman, Makko Sinandei and Laura DeLuca

Introduction

Despite sustained efforts to build and maintain peace on multiple scales across various countries in Africa, little attention has been paid to the customary mechanisms in African societies that can contribute to such efforts.¹ In many places customary peacebuilding practices have long disappeared. Where they still exist, customary mechanisms and the institutions associated with them should not be seen as frozen in time, but rather as evolving socio-cultural systems. Many customary institutions and techniques have changed over time through colonial interventions, independent state actions and other external influences. At the same time, certain aspects of customary institutions may be inadequate for addressing the scale and intensity of contemporary conflicts. Yet this does not mean that customary practices cannot contribute in unique and positive ways to conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts across the continent.

In this chapter, we argue that indeed, customary conflict-resolution techniques can play a vital role in building and sustaining peace in ways that outside interventions alone may not be able to. We argue that customary mechanisms for good governance, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding can be strengthened and supported, while simultaneously making such institutions more democratic and gender-inclusive. Such efforts could help address challenging conflicts and build lasting peace within and between communities. This is in line with suggestions made in the 2011 World Bank Development Report that recognise the importance of governance and institutions (formal and informal) for long-lasting peace and development.²

Our particular focus in this chapter is on the role customary institutions and civil society organisations can play in building peace from within at the community level. We describe an innovative partnership, the Community Leadership Forum (CLF), which emerged between pastoral Maasai customary leaders in Northern Tanzania and a community-based organisation (Ujamaa Community Resource Trust - UCRT) to address continued conflicts while also improving governance and increasing the capacity of local institutions to sustain peaceful relations within and beyond their communities. Pastoralists in Tanzania are marginalised and discriminated against by the state. Their land is often deemed unused, underused or misused and appropriated accordingly by state and international agencies for wildlife conservation or agricultural production. Such actions often lead to or fuel conflicts within pastoral communities, as well as

between pastoral communities and their agricultural neighbours, conservation agencies and foreign investors. At times, such conflicts have received the attention of state and outside interventions, with little success at mediation. The CLF was designed to help 1) prevent such conflicts from occurring (through education and advocacy work), 2) mediate conflicts when they do occur (by supporting customary leaders and conflict-resolution techniques), and 3) work towards building lasting peace within and between communities.

The role and success of the CLF in supporting the work of peace-building are the focus of this chapter. The CLF, which can be seen as a hybrid customary-modern institution, has worked across Northern Tanzania and also across the national border into Kenya when necessary to address conflicts and build the capacity of customary institutions. CLF works with other pastoral groups in Tanzania (the Barabaig), agro-pastoralists (the Sonjo), and gatherer/hunters (the Hadzabe). In this chapter we focus on the CLF work with the Maasai, as it is the particular expertise of the two authors, and also represents the largest component of the CLF project. The nature of conflicts addressed by the CLF can be categorised at various levels, including within an ethnic group but across sections or clans, such as between Purko, Loita, Kisongo, Salei and Laitayok Maasai, or between members of the ‘black cows’ (*Narok-Kiteng*) and those of the ‘red oxen’ (*Nado-Mongi*) Maasai clans (discussed in more detail below); between different ethnic groups (e.g. between Maasai pastoralists and Sonjo agriculturalists); between different communities over land and border disputes; and between communities and outside investors over land grabs. While concentrating on the CLF work with Maasai across Northern Tanzania, we draw extensively from a case study involving conflict between one Maasai section (Loita) and an agricultural community (the Sonjo, locally known as the Batemi) in Ngorognoro district. This case is particularly important, as Ngorongoro was the birthplace of the CLF, and because it reflects the potential of the forum to build peace in a challenging area, with continuing violent conflict, where other interventions have failed.

After a brief introduction to Maasai social structure and customary leadership, we introduce the CLF. We describe how the project has worked to support and enhance customary institutions, and how it has succeeded in addressing conflict of various kinds. This is then followed by a case study, providing a detailed description of the Loita Maasai and Sonjo conflict in particular, including a description of the lessons learned regarding the failure of past efforts at reconciliation, and the creation of the CLF. We conclude with a discussion of the lessons that can be learned from this case study for building and sustaining ‘peace from within’ more broadly.

Background: Maasai customary institutions

The Maasai are a predominantly pastoral people, although today most also cultivate crops for subsistence and profit, and participate in alternative income-earning activities such as wage-labour, gemstone trading, cattle trading, and ‘petty-trade’ in beadwork

and small commodities.³ Occupying an area that stretches approximately 100 000 km²⁴ across the Tanzanian-Kenyan border, the Maasai combine contemporary government territorial distinctions (villages in Tanzania, group ranches or divisions in Kenya) with complex customary social and spatial distinctions. The Maasai are divided into different territorial sections, *iloshon* (pl *olosh* sg.). The Loita and Purko sections are split across the Tanzanian-Kenyan border; on the Tanzanian side, they populate part of Ngorongoro district of Arusha region together with the Salei, and Lataiyok Maasai, and their Sonjo agricultural neighbours. The Maasai across sections (*iloshon*) remain linked through seven major clans (*ilgilat*) and through a shared age-set system. Customary institutions both segregate and unite Maasai across space, kinship, age, and gender. This system is particularly important for understanding the overlapping system of leadership within Maasai society.

Maasai men and women are both separated and connected through clan categories. Maasai clans are broadly divided into two moieties: those of the black cows (*Narok-Kiteng*) and those of the red oxen (*Nado-Mongi*). While clans stretch across sections, clan ties remain the strongest at the local level, and today seem to be gaining strength as an important component in local politics. Maasai marry across clans to extend their social networks and access to pasture. Women are recognised as belonging to the clan of their husband, but with remaining loyalty to their father's clan. Therefore, while clan distinctions separate Maasai, and often cause conflict, cross-clan connections through marriage can represent important opportunities for reconciliation.

Men from different sections and clans are connected under one named age-set. At adolescence, boys are circumcised, become *ilmurran* (*olmurrani*, sg.) often translated as 'warriors'), and enter a new named age-set to which they will belong for the remainder of their lives. Men then progress together with their age-mates through a series of ceremonies where they become (as a group) senior *ilmurran*, elders, and finally retired elders. The age-set system creates strong life-long bonds among age-mates, but it also separates men from different age-sets, effectively mediating interaction among men and between different age-sets of men and women of different age-grade classifications. Women do not belong to organised age-sets, though in many areas they organise themselves into named 'groups', based on the timing of their initiation into womanhood. Generally, women progress from being young girls (*endito*, sg. *intoiye*, pl.), to young wives (*sangiki*, sg., *insangikin*, pl.), to mothers (*yeiyo*), to grandmothers (*koko*), and are recognised as being affiliated with the age-set of their husband.

These overlapping categories of belonging and division are important for understanding power dynamics, social relations, leadership and communication structures. Age-set and clan relations mediate interactions among men and women (i.e. sexual relations, eating, social exchanges, communication). They also demand overlapping leadership structures and diffuse and shifting power relations. Every age-set has its own customary leader (*olaigwanani*, sg. *ilaigwenak*, pl.), selected while young by the elders. *Ilaigwenak* are selected for their character and family background, often

against their own knowledge and wishes. It is a position held for life and includes no monetary reward. In fact, historically *ilaigwenak* were shielded from the very possibility of corruption by not touching money themselves but working with a large number of regional assistants. There are also *ilaigwenak* at the *olosho* (section) level. Historically these were selected from senior age-set leaders to offer guidance and assistance to the community at large. And finally, in certain Maasai sections there are *ilaigwenak* of clans. In certain areas this is a new phenomenon that is being judged with caution, as such leaders are thought to be partial to their own clans, rather than providing leadership for all Maasai.

Maasai customary leadership is thus made up of a group of different representatives of different parts of the Maasai population. Their role has historically been to mediate conflicts between individuals and groups (ranging from marriage and property disputes to theft and murder), to organising important community/age-set/clan events. *Ilaigwanak* have historically been trusted to be honest and sincere, respected for their communication and mediation skills, and feared for their ability to curse the entire age-set or clan in question. During British colonialism, *ilaigwenak* were selected together with respected elders and spiritual healers (*iloibonok*) to act as a group for indirect rule, through an established forum (*olkiama*). With independence in both Tanzania and Kenya the *olikiama* was eliminated and customary leaders were marginalised in the name of modernising the state and establishing official governing structures (e.g. elected village chairmen in Tanzania). Customary leaders continue to play a large role in Tanzania today in their own communities, in social and cultural issues, and sometimes law enforcement in the community (including murder and theft). Customary leaders continue to be respected, trusted and sometimes feared, much more so than elected leaders who are viewed as partial and corrupt. This is illustrated in the following quotation from a female participant in the CLF in Ngorongoro:

Long ago when the *Ilaigwanak* led the meetings in Maasailand there was more peace, because they do not engage with politics, they say everything with fairness and a sense of truth/justice [*haki*]. But today, when they select the village government they bring a lot of 'politics' [*siasa*] and they lead people with force.

However, for the most part, customary leaders have been marginalised regarding official matters, which are dealt with by government leaders.

Ilaigwanak do their work mostly through meetings, *inkiguenak* (pl., sg. *enkigwana*), which are a central feature of Maasai governance and decisionmaking processes. The *enkigwana* acts as a tool of arbitration to settle conflicts, make decisions, and organise events — particularly for *ilaigwenak*. The literal translation of *enkigwana* is discussion, meeting, consultation, debate, or counsel (as in legal dispute).⁵ The word shares the same root as that of *olaigwenani* (pl. *ilaigwanak*), who are respected for their abilities to conduct an *enkigwana*, which includes speaking, listening, delegating, and giving others the opportunity to speak. *Ilaigwanak* run an *enkigwana* in such a way that all present

have an opportunity to speak; the agenda item is always open (e.g. referring to the conflict between the Loita Maasai and the Sonjo), rather than proposing a solution to vote on (e.g. to discuss whether the Sonjo violated the boundary rules); and is over only when consensus has been reached. The consensus reached through an *enkigwana* and endorsed by the *ilaigwanak* is respected as the final word by all involved, because it is created through the very process of debate, which is the foundation of the *enkigwana*, and because it is accepted and endorsed by the leaders.

The community leadership forums: strengthening customary institutions

In 2007 a Tanzanian non-governmental organisation (NGO), the Tanzanian Natural Resource Forum (TNRF), partnered with a smaller local NGO, the UCRT, to initiate an innovative project – the community leadership forums (CLF). The CLF were initiated to support and enhance customary leadership institutions for conflict resolution, peacebuilding and improved natural resource governance, with the support and participation of government political leaders at multiple levels.

The CLF project was initiated in recognition that customary leaders in many pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities are often highly respected and trusted by community members, in comparison to government (appointed and elected) officials at comparable levels. Yet customary leaders have been marginalised by government leaders and institutions, limited in their work to cultural and social issues, and have historically been predominantly (if not exclusively) male. The CLF initiative therefore sought not only to revive the institutions themselves, but also to facilitate their growth into more democratic, empowered, and gender-equitable institutions well positioned for conflict resolution within and beyond community boundaries. The project began by reviving the existing customary leadership institutions among Maasai communities in Longido, Ngorongoro, and Simanjiro district and Barabaig pastoralists in Hanang district. Focused and in-depth training on national policies and laws was provided. This enabled customary leaders to expand their role beyond cultural and social issues, to include conflicts regarding land and natural resources in their communities. Initially, the involvement of women was discussed by forum members, but this was not introduced as a policy until the leaders agreed that women's inclusion in the forum was an important and valuable goal.

Women's involvement in the CLF became streamlined in 2009. Separate women's forums were set up in each district with a CLF, to allow women to reflect on their rights and entitlements within society and to discuss how women can contribute as empowered leaders in their communities. Women were then encouraged to work together with the men in joint community leadership forums to discuss issues together, particularly governance issues and conflicts regarding land. The long-term goal of the CLF initiative is a sustainable community institution for improved local governance and peacebuilding. The CLF is comprised of local customary leaders and women representatives from each community, starting at the village level. From these leaders

representatives are selected to serve at the ward level, then the district level.⁶ The structure of the CLF is designed to match the decentralised government structure of Tanzania to facilitate negotiations and support.

The CLF has been a remarkably successful project in the different areas where it works, particularly after the inclusion of women in 2009. Women have worked to take a stand locally, at the district level and even nationally against illegal and unjust land grabs, and to diffuse conflict with outside investors. Perhaps more importantly, the women have worked together with the men for unified peace within their communities. As one of the female participants in the CLF from Longido district explained, ‘We all need unity so we can lift ourselves up [improve our lives]. If we get peace [*osotwa*] we will work together and share and not quarrel. Our forum (the CLF) will help us to achieve peace [*osotwa*].’⁷ Women have been particularly useful in reaching across clan and sectional divides during conflict, as they are often married across such groups and therefore can more easily negotiate peace. Part of the success of the CLF is based in the faith and trust that people have in their customary leaders, as opposed to elected officials, who are seen as being too mixed up in politics, as illustrated in the following quotation from a female member of the CLF from Ngorongoro district: ‘... the *olaigwenani o losho*, he can’t deprive anyone of their rights [of justice]. The person on the side of justice wins. But with politics [*siasa*], even if they know that you are the one with the just claim, you can be denied justice. *Siasa* [politics] is lies and bribes.’⁸

The CLF has also proved to be a valuable institution for the resolution of local conflicts between Maasai and their agricultural neighbours the Sonjo, in Ngorongoro district. In fact, it was the success of a less formal agreement among customary leaders in this area that led to the formal creation of the CLF as a larger regional project to begin with. The formation of the CLF began when Maasai and Sonjo communities formed a district leadership forum to resolve an ongoing conflict. In each community, smaller leadership clusters based on village and ward territorial distinctions formed with the role of enforcing the implementation of peace sanctions and accords made by the combined leadership group.

The approach of mediation methods and the processes used by the CLF are based on customary values and practices, which imply the use of customary negotiation techniques and meeting styles as discussed above, as well as the use of oaths. To initiate the peacebuilding process between the Loita Maasai and the Sonjo, customary leaders from the two communities agreed to form a neutral body after a long discussion reflecting on their customary roles as leaders. To assure acceptance and accountability of the leaders from both sides, each group presented its rules, roles and behaviours as leaders to the other group and then each group took an oath to be a neutral mediator. The common cross-cutting role was peacebuilding and conflict resolution within and outside the community.

The forum then became the representative body for negotiations in Northern Tanzania, regarding disputes of multiple kinds: over land, cultural issues, social issues, and in the

Ngorongoro area over large-scale conflict between the Sonjo and Loita Maasai. The negotiation process between these groups started at the combined leadership forum (*the neutral group*), which includes customary leaders from both Maasai and Sonjo communities. After initial analysis of the problems, the other leadership clusters at the ward and village levels met and agreed on the negotiation processes of bringing the conflicting groups together. The CLF prepared strategies to undertake the negotiation process to assist it at all levels. After providing some background on this conflict, we will discuss the way in which the CLF worked to secure peace.

Case study: the Maasai-Sonjo conflict

To illustrate the ways in which the CLF has succeeded in resolving conflict where other mechanisms have failed, we draw extensively from a case study involving ongoing conflict between the predominantly pastoral Loita Maasai and the agro-pastoral community, the Sonjo (locally known as the Batemi) in Ngorongoro district. Relations between the two communities have been plagued by serious conflicts related to ethnic clashes, land disputes, livestock theft and cultural attitudes. Even when conflict escalated, state officials and outside liaisons failed to reach lasting solutions. Meanwhile, customary leaders (*Ilaigwanak*) worked towards creating peace but needed support to enhance the breadth and depth of their actions. This support was obtained from the UCRT, which led to the creation of the CLF as discussed above.

Ngorongoro district is an internationally recognised area in Tanzania because of its tourist attractions, especially the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, and its proximity to Serengeti National Park. Maasai pastoralists of multiple sections (Loita, Purko, Salei, Kisongo, and Laitayok) are the main inhabitants of the Ngorongoro district, particularly in Loliondo division, where much of the conflict occurs. The Sonjo, who are mostly agro-pastoralists, populate the Sale division of the same district (see map). Relations between the Loita Maasai and the Sonjo are strained owing to differences in natural resources, modes of production, culture and history.

Background to the conflict

The Sonjo and Loita Maasai have a long history of conflict dating back 200 years.⁹ At mediation talks in 2005 the communities mentioned previous clashes, mostly about cattle rustling, in the 1970s. These conflicts continued to escalate until 1976. At that time the late Prime Minister Edward Sokoine (who was Maasai) held a reconciliation ceremony in an effort to bring about peace between the sides. Conflict has ebbed and flowed since.

A series of events in the early 1990s accelerated conflict in this area. In 1990 a group of NGOs¹⁰ demarcated the boundaries between a number of villages and offered village title deeds. According to one report,¹¹

the recurring of the conflict is blamed by the Loita tribesmen on two successive District Commissioners who happened to be from the Sonjo tribe. According to the complaints, these DC's actually encouraged the Sonjo to demand their land and not to respect the boundaries that were put in place by ADDO¹² in 1990.

In a report released by the Pastoralists Indigenous Non-governmental Organisations Forum over the conflict, it also indicated that the Minister for Land, Housing and Urban Development visited Ngorongoro in 1994 and revoked the title deeds granted to the pastoralist villages, claiming that the process had not been participatory. The local communities interpreted this act as permission not to respect the initial demarcation carried out by ADDO.

In July 2005 a mediation process started, following a serious conflict in which many people were killed. On 5 September 2005, just after the signing of a peace agreement in Olmotonyi, Arusha, at least three people died and seven were injured, according to an official report.¹³ Unofficial reports suggested the numbers of dead were much higher.¹⁴ The Sonjo lost 295 bags of maize and 125 bags of beans and millet, 1 million Tanzanian shillings' damage was done to a shop and 29 houses were burnt. The Loita Maasai had 50 bomas¹⁵ burned, 6 052 bags of maize stolen, 103 sheets of iron for a new school stolen, 336 head of cattle stolen and over 1,3 million Tanzanian shillings stolen.

Conflict resolution between the two groups has been attempted since the 1970s. The first attempt to bring both Sonjo and Loita representatives together was initiated by Edward Sokoine, the late member of parliament (MP) of the Maasai district, mentioned above. This initiative succeeded for almost 12 years, without any serious conflict between the two ethnic groups. The conflict in the 1970s originated from livestock theft, but the conflict shifted from livestock to land issues. As the conflict continued to escalate and grow more complex, various interventions failed to achieve lasting peace.

Lessons learned: understanding the conflict

In order to address the conflict, an analysis was needed to provide in-depth knowledge of the conflict, in order for the mediator to provide realistic solutions.¹⁶ We explain the findings of such an analysis for the Loita Maasai-Sonjo case.

The first step in analysing a conflict is determining who the actors are. The actors in this conflict can be categorised into three main groups; the first group are the residents of the two communities that are fighting each other: the Loita Maasai and the Sonjo. The second group is made up of politicians, elites, business people and government officials from these communities, who fuelled the conflicts by providing the necessary resources and skills and encouraging competition over land. The third party is genuine mediators from the government (external to the area), as well as local, national and international organisations (NGOs/CBOs), who worked to end conflict. External government leaders are considered actors external to the conflict, filling mediation roles only. The role of NGOs such as the UCRT is to support the reconciliation process by securing

financial resources and working with local communities to enable the mediation process to move forward. The UCRT supported community meetings under the supervision of customary leadership and government officials.

A fundamental problem underlying the Loita Maasai-Sonjo conflict is that the two communities have different worldviews and different perceptions of the history of the conflict. At a mediation attempt in 2005, both sides were asked to write down their history of past conflicts and the role of past mediation efforts. While there was little agreement on the events of past clashes (both sides told their histories in a one-sided manner and made no effort to acknowledge grievances on the other side), there was substantial agreement on past mediation efforts.

Based on discussions in 2005 that the government mediation team had with both the Sonjo and the Loita, the following key problems contributing to the ongoing conflicts were identified, on which we elaborate below: historical friction based on different modes of production and ethnic classifications, access to land, perceptions of ownership and belonging, political representation, low levels of education and poor governance.

A difference in culture and mode of production is a major contributing factor to the current conflict. There is a strong memory of conflict and separation between the two groups, which have different modes of production – one is viewed as nomadic pastoralist and the other as settled agro-pastoralist. While there is often productive (and social) mixing between such groups elsewhere, for instance the Sonjo intermarry with the Salei section of the Maasai, there is little mixing and very few marriages between the Sonjo and the Loita/Maasai.¹⁷ This reinforces historical notions of difference and alienation between the two groups.

Access to and control over land is also a central aspect of the conflict, combined with perceptions of ownership and belonging. For a start, the Sonjo feel surrounded by the Loita Maasai and isolated from the wider Tanzanian society. They inhabit a lowlands area that is small, rocky and topographically unfriendly. They feel that they have no room for expansion, which is becoming more of a problem as the population grows. This scarcity of land for the Sonjo is exaggerated by their perception that the Loita Maasai are invaders who have come in from Kenya to take over their land.¹⁸ It is not surprising that the Sonjo have sought to expand out of the lowlands, using cultivation to stake claims to more land in what the Loita consider to be traditionally their pasturelands. The Loita, on the other hand, perceive the Sonjo as gradually taking over their land since 1998, using irrigation and wet season farming. In Tanzania, land legally belongs to those who put it 'to good use', thus favouring agricultural groups; land used by pastoralists such as the Maasai is often viewed as unoccupied or unused land. The Loita thus see the Tanzanian government as favouring the Sonjo and overlooking what they view as the Sonjo's expansionist tactics into Loita territory. In the absence of mutually agreed upon boundaries, these pressures, combined with traditional hostilities, suspicions and claims, are a sure recipe for conflict.¹⁹

Politics have also, of course, played an important role in the conflict. For Sonjo leaders the root of the problem lies in their lack of political voice. Sonjo leaders claim that since the local MP in Ngorongoro district is Maasai and the district council is comprised predominantly of Maasai, they have no political voice. Yet, the Loita Maasai see the central government as being partial to the Sonjo. Such perceptions on both sides can clearly influence the ways in which government-initiated peace efforts are received, or even the ways in which government leaders at different levels are implicated in the conflict. As stated above, the Loita blame the recurrence of conflict on two successive district commissioners (DCs) who were from the Sonjo ethnic group.²⁰ According to the Loita, these DCs actually encouraged the Sonjo to fight for their land and not to respect the boundaries that were put in place in 1990. They claim that the transfer in 1995 of one of the DCs to a new location was linked to his partiality in the conflict.²¹ Even the actions and words of national-level politicians are perceived as contributing to the conflict. This was visible when the Prime Minister visited the area in 2004 and stated that Tanzania was a free country and everyone had the right to live where they deemed fit. Local residents took this to mean that there was no need to respect boundaries, and this created more conflict in the area.²²

Poor governance at multiple levels seems to be a contributing factor to the ongoing conflicts, and particularly in aggravating land disputes. For instance, in many parts of Ngorongoro district and beyond, villages have not been properly surveyed, or were surveyed to include land from neighbouring villages. Many of these villages were registered nonetheless, leading to sustained conflicts with their neighbours. There is also awareness that the actions of past leaders related to land use and land sales continue to contribute to conflicts today (such as signing away village land to particular groups or outsiders); and as illustrated above, mid- and higher-level politicians often exacerbate poor governance at local level.

Finally, unequal levels of education across the two groups may be both contributing to the conflict and hampering mitigation efforts. This was particularly evident during mediation talks in 2005. All Sonjo were conversant in Swahili, the national language, and thus were able to participate fully in the formal discussions. However, many Loita Maasai did not know Swahili and were therefore limited in their capacity to communicate. While translations were provided, the lack of language skills clearly limited the ability of the Loita Maasai to participate fully in discussions and had a great impact on communication between the two groups. Tactically the Sonjo were also able to outmanoeuvre the Loita Maasai during negotiations because of this disparity in language capacity.

Conflict resolution and peacebuilding

The continued conflict in the region has been addressed through various forms of conflict mediation. However, most of these have failed to reduce the conflict or create lasting solutions for peace. During a time of heightened conflict (2004/05), a meeting

was held in Arusha by a government mediation team with the key actors involved. There was a focussed discussion at the meeting on the techniques used up to that time to address the conflict and the obstacles each approach faced. In this section we outline the main lessons learned both from this discussion and from ongoing observations in various villages in the Ngorongoro district.

Lessons learned: mediation

The following lessons were learned from the mediation process that took place in 2004/05:

Of all the reasons mentioned above, poor governance came across as a major contributing factor to current problems between the two sides. While there is a need to involve local communities in decision-making and in the implementation of the negotiation process, doing so was problematic. Communities from both sides complained that mediation talks were not participatory. The mediation talks, in their opinion, led to conflict resolutions that felt forced. Participants in the mediation talks said that this was especially true of decisions related to resources critical to their livelihoods. The Sonjo complained that the village demarcation of 1990 was done without their participation, which explains why their village land was taken (used) by the pastoralist Maasai. On the other hand, it was obvious at the meetings that took place at the time of demarcation that no one was willing to take responsibility for decisions. Local elected leaders were fearful of taking a stand and being held accountable, and they deferred decision-making to the central government.

Mediation attempts were also forestalled by having people who lived in the area act as mediators, even if they were government officials, for they were not seen as being neutral. Although the DC, as the representative of the President in the district, perceived himself as neutral, Maasai saw him as being on the side of the Sonjo, since he was Sonjo. It was for this reason that the mediation team asked that the process be placed under the chairmanship of the regional commissioner; his office is outside the district and he was perceived as neutral. Getting an outsider to help mediate the conflict is critical to the community perception that this is a fair process.

Mediation efforts were often initiated and led by formal government leaders. The mediation team thus initially followed the route of working through the formal leadership of the community. In the end this route did not lead to any settlement between the two sides or the demarcation of boundaries. As discussed above, villagers have much more belief in and support for informal (customary) leaders in their community, than they do for formal government leaders. Several mechanisms implemented by informal leaders proved particularly successful at mediation. One such technique is based on local oath-taking rituals. These rituals are feared and observed by villagers. Oath-taking usually involves a communal sharing of meat or blood from a goat or cow, together with an oath made at that time. Breaking the oath is associated with a curse of some kind. For example, some people feel that the problems that have arisen particularly for the Maasai

are due to their non-adherence to an oath taken with the late Prime Minister Edward Sokoine in a ceremony at Wasso in 1975. At that time, the assembled elders took the leg of a cow and broke the bone together, showing that they had broken the problem together and swearing not to let the problem arise again. One can also have an oath-swearing ceremony where the blood of an animal is collected and the meat roasted and then everyone dips the meat into the blood and eats it, while taking an oath. Going against what was agreed on (the oath), will bring negative consequences (through a curse) to any individual or group that deviates from the promise of the oath.

In addition to the importance of incorporating customary techniques, the mediation team learned that the mediation process needed to be conducted in a professional way. Several past mediation attempts were seen as being poorly organised and politicised by the different actors. Too many mediators and too many actors and organisations were involved. There also needs to be enough time to facilitate the mediation. It was a challenge to establish a balance between keeping the meeting moving along, given the short time frame allowed for mediation and giving people time to talk. This was particularly challenging when using customary techniques, which require a lot more time – whether for oath-taking ceremonies or to run the meetings as customary *enkiguena* [meetings] as described above. These meetings often take all day and are based on the practice of enabling all those who want to, to speak for as long as they need to. In both mediation meetings in 2004/05, two days were allocated for talks. During the meetings, participants tended to get lost in small details, which delayed proceedings and it was difficult to get them to see the big picture. Long meetings and circular discussions are typical of customary communication practices; however, there needs to be a way to support such practices while also keeping mediation talks on target.

Overall, there were four official past mediation attempts: 1) by Edward Sokoine, Prime Minister and MP for the area in 1975, which resulted in peace for 12 years; 2) by a group of educated members of both communities that met in 1996 to put together a strategy for peace; and 3) two official third-party mediation attempts in 2004 and 2005, facilitated by the Tanzanian government with the support of the Irish embassy. The final reconciliation was conducted at Ngaramtoni in Arusha in 2005. Just after the reconciliation meeting, a new fight broke out and the government was forced to use police to keep peace. In examining these past mediation attempts, we found that achievements were made when the following conditions were met: there was respect for local cultures and traditions, there was good participation of local community members, customary and political leaders were in solidarity, there was respect for customary mechanisms used by community members, political leaders at all levels were involved in the process, the process was professional and official and peace accords were signed. Obstacles included diminished respect for customary leadership and its power, rifts between youth and elders; lack of involvement of local political leaders who felt alienated from the efforts, failure to use customary mechanisms; uneven participation of community members, and failure to hold political leaders accountable or to ensure follow-up. These

lessons helped to inform the need for a new way forward, which occurred through the creation of the CLF to incorporate customary leaders in a formal way, connected to government officials at multiple levels.

The CLF and conflict resolution in Ngorongoro district

In Ngorongoro district, the customary leadership forum has been engaged in resolving outstanding community conflicts across different clans and tribes since 2008. Since the beginning of February 2012, the CLF has facilitated the larger-scale conflict-mediation process between Loita Maasai and Sonjo communities over village land disputes. This intervention was facilitated by UCRT and TNRF with support from Oxfam Ireland. The process started with a training session for Sonjo community leaders (*wanamijie*) and Maasai leaders (*ilaigwenak*) and later on the conflict mediation process was facilitated in six villages.

The first training occurred in Piyaya in Ngorongoro district, from 2 to 4 February 2012. The main objective of this training was to bring together the customary leaders from the Sonjo and Loita Maasai communities to discuss the long-standing conflict and develop possible measures to end the conflict. Ten Sonjo leaders and 20 Maasai leaders attended the training, which included four sessions. The first session involved discussion and review of prior CLF plans for peacebuilding in this area, including the review of minutes from prior CLF meetings. The meeting then moved into the second session, which involved an exchange of ideas and experiences regarding the current situation.

This process included some reflection on previous initiatives to resolve the conflict. The council of elders identified pitfalls of prior interventions, mostly that none had involved customary leaders. For instance, one of the Maasai customary leaders said; ‘the major weakness was due to lack of involvement of the customary leaders in the process, instead external people were the drivers of the mediation process, which was easily being interfered with by political interests’.

Another leader identified the weakness of previous interventions as related to a lack of long-term strategies for conflict prevention. Customary leaders concluded that conflict prevention and peacebuilding should be placed in their hands. They argued that they should be the ones to facilitate and seek support from other parties when conflict occurred and not the other way around. The main role of the two groups of leaders was to ensure peace and security in the community in the immediate and long-term. It was agreed that the customary leaders needed to invest their time in peacebuilding and conflict prevention, otherwise they would be blamed if and when any conflict arose.

The third session involved actually mapping out the causes of conflict between Loita Maasai and Sonjo by the members of the CLF. They identified factors discussed above (including increased demand for socio-economic activities, population growth and demand for land, attitudes and stereotypes across both communities). The CLF members also considered land for external exploitation (investment), which was

another major factor resulting in land pressure in the district. Sonjo leaders, for instance, suggested that Maasai were forced to encroach on Sonjo land because their own land was being alienated to serve the interest of external investors. Maasai pastoralists have lost land to tourist investors, national parks and large-scale agricultural investment. In Ngorongoro district, land continues to be appropriated by hunting and safari companies for wildlife tourism.

The fourth and final session involved developing strategies for conflict mediation. Strategies were developed to address the current conflict between Loita Maasai and Sonjo, but it was realised that long-term strategies for sustained peace were also necessary. The CLF members wanted to see how their proposed actions to stop the current conflict could lead to future long-term restoration of peace in the area. During this session, a set of general principles was developed to guide the conflict reconciliation, peacebuilding and conflict-prevention process. The principles were informally agreed upon; there was no signed agreement. It was agreed that the customary leaders were to act as the mediator group, to bring a neutral perspective to their respective communities.

After the meeting, members of the CLF were dedicated to act as mediators of the conflict and had a set of rules and procedures to follow. However, before commencing, it was essential to get the permission and blessing of government authorities. In fact, after the first phase of the meeting in Piyaya, CLF members decided to meet directly with the district commission, the district chairperson, and the district executive director, to seek approval and inform them about the decision made by the council of elders in an attempt to resolve the conflict. Because they worked with higher-level government officials at the early stages, the actions of the CLF were not seen as a threat to the government and they were able to move forward with government support.

The conflict mediation process

After the procedure had been set, conflict mediation was addressed in six villages, viz. 1) Olorien-Magaiduru vs 2) Mgongo-Mageri, 3) Engusero-sambu/Naan vs 4) Kisangiro and 5) Ng'arwa vs 6) Tinaga (see map). As agreed upon during the Piyaya meeting, the mediation process addressed the following strategies, which highlighted the need to integrate negotiations by CLF members with feedback from community members:

- i The customary leaders who attended the Piyaya meeting informed their respective communities (Loita and Sonjo) about what had been agreed upon for conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The elders' area representatives worked in collaboration with the village leadership to call community meetings when required during the reconciliation process.
- ii CLF members visited the disputed area before the reconciliation meeting to learn more about the geographical location of the disputed areas. The CLF was guided by the customary leaders' representatives or village government leaders to propose possible solutions to end the conflicts.

- iii CLF members conducted public meetings prior to mediation interventions. These public meetings gave the communities a chance to express their feelings and opinions before the negotiation process. The meeting also aimed at providing space for CLF leaders to present their opinions and strategies for peace-creation and conflict-resolution processes.
- iv Leaders held separate meetings to discuss the outcomes of the community meetings and developed the final conclusion for resolving the conflict. This implies that customary leadership had some time to apply orders for community members to resolve the conflicts. The agreed terms for peacebuilding were determined based on the situation — either by influencing people to accept them, or if needed, through direct orders. Enforcement options involved oath-taking, cursing, fines, barriers and the establishment of legal procedures. It is the very ability of customary leaders to use such tactics (and not abuse them) that makes them particularly effective and respected.
- v The terms agreed upon were presented to the village councils, village general assemblies and the local government. Once the terms had been approved by all the parties, they became an official accord and legal tool for peacebuilding.

Achievements of the mediation process

The mediation process described above had remarkable success on its own, but particularly as compared to the failure of past interventions. We highlight just a few of the positive results here.

The first achievement can be seen as the actual creation of a unified group of elders and customary leaders from both Maasai and Sonjo communities, which was approved by the government to undertake the mediation process to resolve outstanding conflicts. After the Piyaya meeting, the CLF, in collaboration with government officials and government security,²³ facilitated the reconciliation meetings by bringing together the disputing parties (Loita Maasai and Sonjo). The customary leaders from both sides developed strategies to end the conflict. The strategies were presented to the local and regional government for approval and were adopted by all parties engaged in resolving the conflict. These strategies provided a road map for the reconciliation process.

Moreover, after the first meeting, peace and harmony were restored to both communities and relations began to be re-established. For example, Sonjo and Loita Maasai residents started to farm together on disputed land without being bound by political boundaries. Social interaction was opened; the closed road for business and other social services such as schools was opened, enabling water resource sharing and the opening of markets. Also, essential footpaths that had been closed for seven months were opened across all the bordering villages. The opening of footpaths was an indication of peace. In addition to enabling the free movement of people, women

and other business people were able to interact and to access markets. This means that overall access to markets and health care centres was improved.

Lastly, boundary disputes in four villages were resolved. The village boundary disputes had remained the main factor encouraging conflict escalation. Therefore the identification of village boundaries was an important achievement in resolving the overall conflict. The agreed boundaries provided an opportunity for village land boundary demarcation. Four villages out of six needed urgent demarcation before legal processes could be initiated, for example the creation of land use plans, which were required for the completion of village land certificates. The villages that are ready for boundary marking are Olorien-Magaiduru, Mgongo, Naan and Kisangiro. The remaining two villages are Ng'rwaa and Tinaga, which require further negotiation intervention.

These achievements highlight structural improvements on the ground (open schools, markets, and roads), cultural and social reconciliation (Loita Maasai and Sonjo Sonjo accepting one another and working together), legal mediations (over land boundaries) and the very creation of a new institution to work towards conflict resolution and peace in the future – in this area and throughout Northern Tanzania.

Conclusion

Building peace from within means starting from the communities, customs, traditions, histories, and people where conflict occurs – to transform conflict into justice and build lasting peaceful relations within and across communities. Relying on outside interventions to resolve conflict and bring about peace is unlikely to work in the long run, and *cannot* build peace from *within*. Throughout Africa, customary institutions continue to work, if in isolated and marginalised ways, to build peace on small scales — within and between families, between individuals at odds within a community, etc. In many places, as explained here for the Maasai, such customary institutions and the leaders associated with them remain highly respected by community members. Yet customary leaders and peacebuilding techniques are not often used for larger scale conflict, or even recognised by African governments or outside organisations.

In this chapter we illustrated the opportunities that exist in recognising, supporting and building on customary institutions for peacebuilding within and across communities. This is not a romantic call to return to the past, to support some unchanged ‘traditions’ or undemocratic ‘chiefs.’ Customary institutions have changed over time and will continue to change, and in some ways need to change to be more representative of communities (i.e. gender equality), and to engage peace from within on a larger scale (i.e. across different ethnic groups). The CLF represents a unique project that sees the value of working with customary leaders in building peace, but also recognises that customary institutions need support (financial and logistic), modifications (for gender equity), and training and education on national laws and procedures to enable them to address issues essential for peace in their communities (e.g. land conflicts). The CLF

project came from below (i.e. from *within* communities), it was started by customary leaders themselves who saw that it was time for them to stand up to address a conflict that outsiders had failed to resolve. The project has succeeded by working with, rather than against local and regional government, and by enabling customary leaders to lead the way, with local and national organisations providing the necessary support.

Policy recommendations

1. The endogenous conflict-resolution approach through customary leadership systems requires legal recognition, to reduce ethnic clashes and promote peacebuilding from within. The traditional mediation process through cultural values provides deep and wide analysis in addressing the root causes of conflicts. This approach uses indigenous knowledge and customary mediation systems and creates more trust among the disputants. Policy-makers and NGO workers should respect, understand, and build on customary institutions (leadership, conflict resolution, communication techniques). This includes accepting practices that may seem archaic or illogical (i.e. oath-swearing ceremonies), and enabling local communication techniques, which require more time than short NGO and government ‘field’ visits often allow for. It may also necessitate change to make such institutions more gender- and age-equitable, as well as providing education and training when needed. As a part of this process, it is important to document indigenous knowledge and customary mechanisms for arbitrating conflict, otherwise such knowledge may disappear.
2. It is important to build partnerships across institutions: between customary leaders and members of the government. This includes representatives at similar levels (i.e. village and ward), back and forth communication and collaboration, representation of each in the meetings of the other and sustained respect for the different types of leaders and techniques used.
3. It is important for the policy-makers to understand that pastoralism is a sustainable livelihood system that supports the life of many indigenous societies in the world today. Policy-makers should be aware of the largely inaccurate misconception that pastoralism is unsustainable, unproductive and causes environmental degradation. Pastoralism is not an evolutionary stage on the way to agriculture, but is a valid livelihood itself. A thorough understanding of pastoralism would reveal the importance of pastoralists to maintain large tracts of undeveloped land for grazing. The loss of grazing land is at the heart of many conflicts in pastoral areas. From a legal perspective, post-colonial African governments often view pastoral lands as open lands that are unproductive.
4. In order to achieve social justice and sustainable peace, African governments need to create equitable natural resource and land use policies. Local communities must

be represented in national policy and development decision-making, especially with regard to external investors.

5. All stakeholders should work for sustainable solutions that can continue to function independently without external support. This requires starting with communities and building on what they have, and working to enable new institutions (such as the CLF) to be self-sustaining.

Notes and references

- 1 Zartman, I.W., 2000. *Traditional cures for modern conflicts: African conflict 'medicine.'* Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.
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- 3 McCabe, J.T., 2003. Disequilibrium ecosystems and livelihood diversification among the Maasai of Northern Tanzania: Implications for conservation policy in Eastern Africa. *Nomadic Peoples*. 7, pp. 74-92.
- 4 Talle, A., 1988. *Women at a loss: Changes in Maasai pastoralism and their effects on gender relations.* PhD thesis, University of Stockholm.
- 5 Mol, F., 1996. *Maasai: Language and culture.* Narok, Kenya: Mill Hill Missionary, p. 181. The Maasai continue to use their own mediation techniques, such as *enkiguena*, to resolve legal disputes such as theft, marital issues, custody, and inheritance rights.
- 6 Tanzania is divided into 26 regions (*mkoa* in Swahili). Each region is subdivided into districts (*wilaya*). The districts are sub-divided into divisions (*Taaraifa*) and wards (*kata*). Urban wards are further subdivided into streets (*mitaa*) and rural wards are subdivided into villages (*vijiji*) and then subdivided into sub-villages (*vitongoji*).
- 7 Interview, 2009.
- 8 Interview, 2009.
- 9 Gray, R., 1963. *The Sonjo of Tanganyika: An anthropological study of an irrigation-based society.* London: Oxford University Press for the International African Institute.
- 10 Participating organisations included the Arusha Catholic Diocesan Development Office (ADD), Korongoro Integrated Peoples Oriented to Conservation (KIPOC), International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Serengeti Regional Conservation Strategy (SRCS).
- 11 PINGOS Forum and LARRI, 2004. The Conflict between Loita Maasai and the Sonjo in Loliondo and Sale divisions, Ngorongoro district, Tanzania: A report of a fact finding mission which took place from 21 July to 1 August 2004.
- 12 The Arusha Catholic Diocesan Development Office, see endnote 10.
- 13 Eamon, B., 2005. *Ngaramtoni negotiation meeting report for peacebuilding and conflict resolution among the Maasai and Sonjo communities, Arusha Tanzania.*
- 14 2004. Farmer and pastoralists conflict in Loliondo. *Daily Newspaper*.

- 15 Boma is Swahili for a Maasai homestead, *enkang* in Maa. It is comprised of multiple houses of several polygamous families, a joined cattle kraal, and separate enclosures for sheep and goats. Bomas are usually enclosed by a thorn fence.
- 16 Bloomfield, D. et al., 1998. *Democracy and deep-rooted conflict. Options for negotiation*. Stockholm: Institutes for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.
- 17 It is noteworthy that at mediation talks in January 2005 one Sonjo stood up at one tense moment of the meeting and appealed for peace, as he was the only person present at the meeting who had both a Sonjo wife and a Loita wife. He said that this conflict had brought a lot of tension to his household and he did not want to leave the meeting without peace.
- 18 It should be noted that some Loita Maasai in both Tanzania and Kenya often cross the Tanzania-Kenya border freely, contributing to these perceptions and fears.
- 19 Odhiambo, 2008. *Conflict in Ngorongoro district: Causes, consequences, and possible solutions*.
- 20 District commissioners are appointed by the President and placed anywhere in the country to administer a given district for the central Tanzanian government. This system has British colonial roots.
- 21 District commissioners are not typically dismissed, but are often transferred by the central government when problems arise.
- 22 PINGOS Forum and LARRI, 2004. The conflict between Loita Maasai and the Sonjo in Loliondo and Sale divisions, Ngorongoro district, Tanzania: A report of a fact finding mission which took place from 21 July to 1 August 2004, pp.10-11.
- 23 The role of district security was to ensure peace was maintained throughout the discussion process.

The role of women in grassroots peacebuilding in Kenya

Karambu Ringera

Introduction

There are political, economic and socio-cultural structures and processes that drive peacebuilding processes globally, and Kenya is not an exception. These processes are driven by the dominant ideology¹ of war and peacebuilding embedded in a patriarchal bias. This reinforces conflict models that are reactive (protectionist and exclusionist) instead of proactive (empowering and inclusive). These models are gender-exclusive, hence they perpetuate systemic exclusion of and dismissiveness of women's peacebuilding efforts.

Many peacebuilding agencies in Kenya seem to be disengaged from the context on the ground – women are actually doing and have always done something about war and peacebuilding throughout history. Furthermore, they fail to embody the critical characteristics of peacebuilding: inclusion, participation, emancipation, collaboration and empowering.

When Kenya experienced serious post-election violence in 2007/08 and a peace agreement was signed in 2008 between the two principal antagonists, President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga, Kenyan women struggled to be included in the reconciliation and mediation process that followed. Women continue to struggle to have their voices heard, despite the existence of about 200 organisations involved in peacebuilding in Kenya.² Few of these organisations specifically focus on women's empowerment and inclusion in the peace process.

Since the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 in 2000, it has become clear that women's organisations and civil society networks run by women are important facets of making peacebuilding more effective and sustainable, both locally and nationally. Through partnerships, women's networks and coalitions are positioning themselves to channel multiple gender-sensitive voices and concerns effectively to the highest levels of government and international policy-making. Women and women's perspectives are recognised globally as a critical necessity in the lead-up to formal peace talks, peacebuilding and institution-building.³

The 2007/08 post-election violence threatened to tear asunder a nation known for its relative peace and stability. However, a closer examination reveals an unprecedented wave of internal and cross-border conflicts. Conflicts over natural resources and land, tribal clashes, and lately terrorism have been erasing this false image of peacefulness.

Pastoralists in Northern Kenya have borne much of the brunt of internal conflicts, and considerable efforts have been directed at addressing their specific conflict environment by a number of stakeholders, including the government of Kenya, civil society organisations (CSOs), faith-based organisations and community-based organisations. The resource-based conflicts (water and pasture) prevalent in arid areas have completely distorted development programmes and eroded civil administration of this vast and rugged countryside.

Multi-party politics in Kenya in the 1990s brought in its wake new dimensions of conflict. Communities were divided along ethnic, political and ideological lines, which gave rise to protracted and institutionalised waves of tribal and land clashes. A deep-seated cause of the 2008 post-election violence was land and economic disparity (resource distribution and ownership in the hands of a few). Recent developments associated with terrorist groups such as Al Shabaab – grenade attacks and bombings in Nairobi, Mombasa and Dar-es-Salaam, the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre in New York and the rise of piracy in the Indian Ocean – have challenged humanity to re-think models of conflict. More and more, violence occurs within nations, with various groups turning against one another.

The dangers posed to Kenya by the statelessness of Somalia cannot be overstated. Currently, many unemployed Kenyan youth are going to Somalia to be trained for military action. Those who join Al Shabaab often return to Kenya and, as in the case of recent grenade attacks, perpetrate violence in their own societies and thus are a real danger for the stability of Kenya. Terrorism, not only in Kenya but in the whole world, has introduced a new fundamental dimension to the realm of conflict management and the security of citizens.

Against this backdrop, the political climate in Kenya has not been responsive as far as policy formulation and legislation are concerned. Today, there is no substantive national policy on conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Kenya. Apart from the draft terrorism bill, disaster management (floods and drought) and famine relief issues, there are no existing functional frameworks for conflict management. What exist are fragmented and uncoordinated policy statements embedded in various thematic policy issues. Currently, there is an effort by the National Steering Committee on Conflict Management and Peacebuilding to come up with a draft national policy on peacebuilding and conflict management in Kenya.

In the past, policies have been implemented with little regard for local community knowledge or indigenous systems of peacebuilding, governance and natural resource management. More often than not, policymakers are operating under conditions of market failure caused by factors such as droughts, flooding and civil strife. There is a need to look beyond the immediate triggers of conflicts by formulating policies and economic blueprints that seek to enhance people's freedom,⁴ thus improving household incomes, access to resources that enable people to meet their basic needs (education,

shelter, health, social justice, economic and political freedom) and social services, especially among marginalised pastoralists and in rural Kenya.

As attempts to develop a national conflict management policy in Kenya solidify, one must ask who is at the decision-making table to guide and participate in these dialogues and initiatives. It is evident that even though there are international legal frameworks in place to support peace and human rights, many African nations, including Kenya, have neither signed nor ratified these instruments. In addition, it is clear that women and youth have been largely excluded from these initiatives.⁵

The premise of exclusion of women from peace processes in Kenya

United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 was unanimously passed by the UN Security Council in October 2000. Since then there has been little or no effort from the Kenyan government and other peacebuilding actors to integrate it into Kenyan laws. Kenyan women still remain largely excluded from peace and security processes despite their efforts to preserve social order and education to achieve peace at the grassroots level. When women are excluded, the different impact of decisions on men and women is not fully understood, women's rights are not overtly addressed and their recommendations are excluded from final agreements.

When Kenya experienced post-election violence in 2008, Dr Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the UN, was invited by the African Union (AU) to lead the mediation process. His intervention resulted in some recommendations, including what has come to be known as 'Agenda Four', a set of actions and reforms that the government was required to undertake to create mechanisms of accountability, democracy and rule of law in Kenya. The Kofi Annan mediation process is regarded by many as exclusive because it addressed the short-term, political aspects geared towards stopping violence and sharing power, and overlooked not only the root causes of the conflict, but excluded the voices of women, youth, civil society and the survivors of the conflict altogether. In the end, the whole exercise became the usual power-sharing and deal-making event for the government and opposition sides. The need to end violence may have necessitated this short-term and short-vision intervention; however, the long-term impact is with us today.

Research has shown that peace processes incorporating increased women's involvement are more sustainable.⁶ In her book, *Women building peace: What they do – Why it matters*, Anderlini provides many examples of countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Uganda and El Salvador, among others, where involving women in peace processes drastically changed the dynamics of the process in terms of what concerns were brought to the table. In these instances, the issues of child soldiers, former women combatants, orphans and widows, giving voice to survivors of the violence and humanising the conflict became core agenda items with critical significance for healing, reconciliation and integration of survivors and marginalised groups into the community.

Assumptions about women in post-conflict situations act to exclude them from participation in the peacebuilding process. The first assumption is that women are passive victims and thus apolitical and powerless. The second and third assumptions are that women are biologically and socially disposed to peaceful tendencies such as collaboration and nurturing.⁷

Other excuses advanced by Anderlini for the exclusion of women include cultural norms where gender inequality and exclusion are embedded in local culture.⁸ In addition, women leaders are ‘elites’ and not representative of the broad population. Other people say that since women are not involved in the fighting, they should not be involved in the peacemaking. Women sometimes show reluctance to engage directly in decision-making and peace processes or succumb to pressure and withdraw because of a number of factors. One is ignorance: many women are not aware of the fact that it is their right to be included in decision-making and peace processes.

Three specific challenges that women face include: 1) *Socialisation*: Women are socialised to believe that leadership positions belong to men and women should only play supportive roles. Some female leaders, in order to survive in a very aggressive male-dominated world, become conformists in order to survive and forget that they are there to advance the interests of all, including women. 2) *Lack of capacity and agency*: Women have the passion to work toward peaceful solutions but lack the skills. This calls for strengthening of women’s advocacy skills so they know how to claim space at the decision-making tables. 3) *Building alliances*: Another challenge is how to overcome resistance from men who perceive the inclusion of women as a threat. Women therefore need to learn how to build male allies in addition to building coalitions with other women, so that the critical mass needed to build and attain change can be achieved.

Peacebuilding approaches from the top: woman as ‘victim’

The articulation of conflict in Africa in general and Kenya in particular, is gender-polarised and reflects a patriarchal bias. This patriarchal bias has led not only to ‘re-subjecting’ women; they are positioned as ‘women’ in a patriarchal, violence-prone society, and also as objectified ‘women’ as victims of violence.⁹ This representation of women exclusively as victims reinforces conflict models that are reactive (protectionist and exclusionist) instead of proactive (empowering and inclusive). The ‘woman as victim’ models continue to perpetrate systemic exclusion of women from the peace process.

Portrayals of women as violence/war victims by international media, regional bodies, local governments, and organisations has affected women’s positioning in peacebuilding discourses and led to the creation of biased strategies and policies to respond to violence/war.¹⁰ This description negates women’s participation and reinforces stereotypes about their capacities.¹¹ The contributions that women have made not only in peace efforts, but also during war have typically been made invisible, making the practice of exclusion easier to impose.

An engendered peace process is critical for women's survival in post-conflict reconstruction.¹² The participation of women and reflection of gender perspectives in peace agreements are crucial so that such agreements fully address the gender-specific consequences of armed conflict and ensure women's participation in the reconstruction of post-conflict societies, and thus in the prevention of future conflict.

The masculine construction of war, security, negotiations and the structure of the formal political system, positions the visibility of men and male soldiers in the role of peace negotiators.¹³ In my experience, a protectionist approach often tends to exclude those being protected from participating and contributing to the process of their emancipation.

Exclusion of women from regional (such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development [IGAD]) and local government (such as the district peace committees) peacebuilding initiatives is a reflection of a traditional norm in the African mainstream peacebuilding arena. As a patriarchal society, Kenya has so far adopted modernist and patriarchal approaches to respond to the post-election violence, which has offered limited and partial frameworks for building peace.

It is imperative that peace builders focus on creative ways that view women not just as victims, but as survivors of violence, and to create holistic approaches to peacebuilding based on the empowerment of women and moral imagination.¹⁴ This holistic approach encompasses a peacebuilding vision where people have fair access to resources, is based on social justice, respects fundamental human rights recognised under local and international law, and is rooted within community. Also, it must be sustained locally, involve a multiplicity of actors and voices, and apply many-sided approaches to development so that it balances and integrates the roles of the government, political, economic and social institutions and components.¹⁵

Background to Kenya's post-election crisis 2007/08

The 2007 elections in Kenya were the fourth since the country's return to multiparty politics in 1992. There were three major candidates at the presidential level: Mwai Kibaki representing the Party of National Unity, Raila Odinga representing the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), and former Minister of Foreign Affairs Kalonzo Musyoka representing ODM-Kenya. During the final day of counting presidential votes by the Electoral Commission of Kenya, Odinga's lead rapidly declined and there was a 2.5 per cent margin between Odinga and Kibaki. According to international observers, there had been definite irregularities in the tabulation and reporting of the vote.¹⁶

The International Institute for Strategic Studies reported that by late January 2008, more than 250 000 people had been displaced from their homes and more than 1 000 people had been killed. The report estimated that the final figure of the economic loss caused by the conflict could be as much as one billion dollars.¹⁷ Some 322 women and girls sought hospital treatment for sexual assaults and rape during this period,¹⁸ despite reluctance to report rapes and the fact that many victims were displaced.

While initially the perception was that those from Kibaki's Kikuyu ethnic group in the Rift Valley, especially in the town of Kisumu, were the main targets of the violence, victims came from at least four other ethnic groups: the Luo (in Nairobi), the Kalenjin (in Nakuru and Naivasha), and the Luhya and Kisii in less concentrated groups across the country.¹⁹ The violence largely took on the appearance of being ethnic in nature, although much of the violence in the slums around Nairobi was also motivated by poverty and unemployment, and some may have been perpetrated by easily manipulated young people and criminal groups that had nothing to lose from engaging in and sustaining the violence.²⁰

Word of mouth and media reports began emerging early of killings, widespread looting and the burning of property.²¹ As time passed, massacres, sexual violence, beatings, intimidation and threats were also reported.²² The violence that broke out following the announcement of election results appeared to be spontaneous and motivated by a sense of injustice at the apparent discrepancies between the expected and actual outcomes of the election, but time and hindsight revealed very different roots and manifestations.²³

Basic trust in the ethnic neutrality of state institutions had been eroded by decades of discontent with disparity and impunity, and heightened by the collapse of the multi-ethnic National Alliance Rainbow Coalition, the country's most recent attempt at inclusion and reform, which did not stand the test of time.²⁴

By 31 December 2007, just three days after the results had been announced, at least 15 people were already confirmed dead.²⁵ Not all of the violence, however, was a spontaneous reaction to unjust processes. Inquiries undertaken by human-rights bodies such as Human Rights Watch revealed that much of it was by nature organised.²⁶

Well-known gangs that had been financed and organised by business and political groups in previous elections, such as the Taliban and Mungiki, were apparently being armed with machetes and other weapons before the elections and later, even as negotiations began.²⁷ Non-Kikuyu gangs such as the 'Taliban' and 'Baghdad Boys' – largely Luo-based – and Kalenjin youth had been prepared for many days before December to evict unwanted ethnic groups perceived to be anti-ODM from Western Kenya 'when' ODM won the elections. They were supported by elite political members of their communities. The Sabot Land Defence Force was also responsible for some of the more organised violence.²⁸ The Mungiki, drawn from a Kikuyu base, appears to have received support from elite members of Kenyan society and to have been prepared for the violence ahead of time,²⁹ in defence of attacks on their Kikuyu brethren being evicted from the Rift Valley, Kisumu and Western Kenya in general.

When the election results were announced, live broadcasts of the inconsistencies between the numbers announced at the central level and those at the local level, accompanied by hate speech on vernacular radio³⁰ targeting various ethnic groups, helped spread the message and the violence. By 15 January over 500 people were dead and more than 250 000 displaced. The violence continued until early February 2008, by

which time 1 000 people were thought to have died.³¹ What might have been small-scale – albeit organised and brutal – gang violence, accompanied by incidents of post-election, public, spontaneous rage, revealed itself to run much deeper and resulted in much more pervasive patterns of violence.³² The scale of the violence reflected long-held grievances combined with severe poverty: according to the 2004-08 UN Development Assistance Framework, 56 per cent of the population is living in poverty.

According to Opiyo and Orlale, control of resources and control of government go hand in hand, and given that the incumbent government has traditionally been controlled by one ethnic group (to the detriment of others), poverty is often aligned with ethnicity.³³ In Kenya resentment runs high over land ownership and land use, and is aggravated further by high levels of unemployment, especially among the youth.

The violence, therefore, must be understood within the historical framework of exclusion and marginalisation that has permeated political life in Kenya, both during and since colonial times. The elections were therefore a catalyst for a set-bomb of discontent and resentment due to the politics of dispossession, which have left the majority of the youth unemployed, 60 per cent of the population living on less than \$1 a day and the majority of the country's most fertile land in the hands of the families of the political and business elite. The country has one of the most thriving economies, largest tourist industries, and most active business circles in Africa, but the benefits are not shared fairly among the population. When the Kofi Annan Panel of Eminent Persons arrived in Nairobi the situation on the ground was serious, verging on catastrophic, and as Opiyo and Orlale state, the country collectively held its breath in suspense, waiting for peace to return.³⁴

In February and early March 2012 violence continued to escalate and when mourners clashed with police, it became clear that even prayer ceremonies for those already killed did not provide peaceful respite from the mounting instability.³⁵ Thousands of people were trapped in Kibera and Mathare slums in Nairobi without access to medical aid, water and food, while houses in the Rift Valley continued to be subjected to arson attacks and gangs, which had been operating largely underground, re-emerged in Nairobi to offer protection to slum-dwellers living in fear.³⁶ There was a sharp drop in tourism, a terrible blow to the Kenyan economy. Furthermore, road blocks on the major transit routes caused transport chaos, resulting in a huge increase in the price of wheat and other staple foods.

Kibaki and Odinga, however, continued to refuse to engage in dialogue – the former insisted upon his rightful place as president of Kenya, who would manage this crisis internally, while the latter stated that the election had been rigged and his win stolen. However, through the intervention of various African former presidents and AU-mandated dignitaries, including the mediation led by Dr Kofi Annan, by the end of March 2008 the violence had dramatically reduced, the two leaders had agreed to share

power, and the people of Kenya appeared to breathe easily again – and Kenyans were looking back and wondering ‘what have we done?’

The Kofi Annan mediation process in Kenya

The loss of life, the scale of the social and economic destruction in Kenya, could have been much greater were it not for the peace mediation mandated by the AU in January 2008. The Panel of Eminent African Personalities was chaired by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and culminated in the Agreement on the Principles of Partnership of the Coalition Government, which was signed by President Mwai Kibaki and the Honorable Raila Odinga on 28 February 2008, putting an end to the crisis that had engulfed the nation.³⁷

The mediation process took 41 days. It was a critical process, urgently needed in order to save this former oasis of peace from experiencing large-scale genocide, as happened in Rwanda. The crisis was an opportunity to address deeply rooted problems and create a political system that could attempt to eliminate the vast disparities in wealth and the endemic sense of marginalisation, a legacy of Kenya’s colonial and post-colonial years.

The mediation process, which began on 22 January 2008, was led by the Panel of Eminent African Personalities consisting of former President Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania and former South African First Lady Graça Machel. The panel was charged with ensuring that an escalation of the crisis was avoided and that the opportunity to bring about sustainable peace was seized as soon as possible.³⁸

This unique team relied on worldwide diplomatic support and had the technical support of the United Nations, including the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, and United Nations Office in Nairobi, as well as the Geneva-based Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue. On 24 January, the government and the opposition agreed on a political framework to address the post-election violence: the Kenya National Dialogue and Reconciliation. According to the agreement the final goal of the political dialogue was to achieve sustainable peace, stability and justice through the rule of law and respect for human rights.³⁹

Within the framework the parties made important commitments to address long-standing issues such as land reform, police and judicial reform, socio-economic inequalities, corruption, accountability and the disarmament of militias. They also agreed to establish an Independent Review Committee to investigate the 2007 presidential election, to conduct a constitutional review process to be completed within 12 months; to establish a Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission and a Commission of Inquiry, the latter with a mandate to investigate the facts and circumstances related to the violence that occurred between 28 December 2007 and 28 February 2008.⁴⁰ On 28 February, President Mwai Kibaki and ODM leader Raila Odinga signed a power-sharing deal, under which a new Prime Minister’s position was created and cabinet posts allocated based on each party’s representation in parliament.

For many, this was a triumph of African diplomacy and the first realisation of the international community's 'responsibility to protect', enshrined in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document. The agreement certainly avoided more violence and bloodshed and may have avoided genocide on African soil. The one disappointing aspect of this effort is that very few women were involved in the negotiations.

Women's representation on the Panel of Eminent African Personalities was minimal. There was only one woman – former South African First Lady Graça Machel. Moreover, when the contesting Kenyan leaders (Kibaki and Raila) put together their negotiation teams, there were only two women, both representing political party interests, an occurrence that caused many CSOs and non-governmental organisations in Kenya to rise up and organise a parallel group to meet with Kofi Annan. The women activists were not allowed into the meeting room but were asked to write down their demands and present them to Mr Annan at a separate session.

Impact of women's exclusion on sustainable peace

Exclusion of women from peacebuilding has widespread societal impact. When women are not democratically represented, neither are their interests, which are usually 'bread and butter' issues.⁴¹ Their exclusion threatens human security and political stability and is directly linked to their marginalisation in decision-making processes in general.⁴² It is important to note that the exclusion of women from peace processes results from systemic flaws in the structure and process of peace negotiations.

Traditionally, peace negotiations were meant to end wars between nations, premised on cease-fire agreements and military retreats. Political and military leaders negotiated terms for ending the war. Diplomatic and economic ties gradually restored relationships between warring nations. Today's intrastate wars, or those relating to or existing within the boundaries of a state, provide a different scenario, where one neighbour rapes and kills another's family. Refugees and internally displaced peoples (IDPs) have no homes to return to. Women's bodies, homes, cities, villages, and communities are the battlefields.

Anderlini observes that political and military leaders may agree to end the war and share power, 'but they alone cannot bring peace within communities or trust between neighbors'.⁴³ It is at the community level, where people live with people who raped their wives and daughters, destroyed their homes and maimed their sons, that healing and reconciliation have to begin. This is where the role of women in peacebuilding is critical for healing, reconciliation, integration and reconstruction to take place. Excluding women from peace processes is tantamount to societal suicide, as evidenced by failure upon failure of nations to bring sustainable peace to their communities until women create grassroots peace initiatives. Liberia is a good example, where women led the process to end many years of war and have since spearheaded the reconstruction of their country under the leadership of Madam Sirleaf Johnson, the first woman to head an African country.

Without women's equal participation and full involvement in peacebuilding, neither justice nor development is possible. As Anderlini observes, '[the] perspectives they bring to the peace table stem largely from their circles of concern, the voices and experiences they are closest to, from within the home and the community'.⁴⁴ Heyzer asserts that 'when women's voices are heard and heeded, critical priorities that would otherwise be left out of peace processes are often reflected'.⁴⁵

In 2008, the absence of women at the Kofi Annan mediation meant that women's concerns, such as issues of rape and the resettlement of IDPs, were considered insignificant. The main concern at that time was to stop the violence. The issue of resettlement of people who were displaced is still ignored or addressed inadequately. Funds meant for resettlement are alleged to have been misappropriated, according to media reports. Pressure from CSOs and such media exposure has led to the resettlement of some of the IDPs.

Failure to include both genders in the peace process has a negative effect on women, children, men, the vulnerable, disabled, the homeless, and eventually society.⁴⁶ Inequality, whether socio-economic, religious, ethnic, or gender-based, is not democratic and is conducive to the resumption of conflict.⁴⁷ Since women are professors, wives, mothers, teachers, sisters, aunts, social workers, doctors, lawyers, farmers, human rights activists, grandmothers, and politicians, they are often dealing with direct and indirect repercussions of violence every day of their lives. People die during war, but more critical is the destruction of livelihoods, the onset of depression and trauma, destruction of farmlands and communities, the spread of diseases, the absence of education and schooling, profound loss of societal cohesion and trust, and the end of life as was once known and experienced – 'so much destruction and devastation at all levels of life that probably those who die are luckier', a woman from South Sudan once told me during my field research.⁴⁸

The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 called for increased access to conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms by women. It also raised the consciousness of international policymakers about women's role in peace and in creating conditions of trust and confidence among conflicting parties. The Platform for Action states that: 'In a world of continuing instability and violence ... the equal access and full participation of women in power structures and their full involvement in the prevention and resolution of conflicts are essential for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security'.⁴⁹

In October 2000, after much lobbying from women human rights groups and some representatives of member states of the UN, the UN Security Council engaged in consultation on the disproportionate effects of conflict on women, the importance of having their voices at the negotiation tables and peace processes, as well as in determining reparations. UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security was unanimously adopted in October 2000. The Security Council affirmed that in order to alleviate the excessive suffering women and girls continue to face before, during and after

conflict, their voices must be heard in all the processes that seek to restore peace and good governance. The resolution also emphasises the importance of including women as equals not just after conflicts have occurred, but also in conflict prevention.

In 2008, the UN Security Council, moreover, noted that despite repeated condemnation and calls for action, sexual violence against women and girls in situations of war and conflict had escalated and reached appalling levels. It further noted that warring factions continued to use rape and sexual violence as a tactic of war. Through Resolution 1820, the Security Council reaffirmed its commitment to take specific actions where necessary against systematic sexual violence targeted at women and girls. Resolution 1889 of 2009 calls for action on issues touching on children in times of armed conflict and sexual violence,⁵⁰ with a view to stop all forms of violence committed against women and girls in armed conflict, including rape and other sexual violence, and to prosecute those responsible.

During the Beijing +Five review process through late 1999 to mid-2000, African women identified decision-making and political participation, globalisation, conflict, HIV/AIDS and women's human rights as the five critical areas of concern hindering advancement on the implementation of the Beijing and Dakar Platforms for Action. Given the critical importance of mainstreaming gender in the AU, CSOs have to continue to call for the removal of structural barriers that pose obstacles to women in order to ensure that African women participate in political processes at national level and aspire to positions and portfolios that play significant policy roles at the AU – particularly presidents, foreign affairs ministers and ambassadors.

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and other UN actors' view is that peace agreements not only signify the formal cessation of armed conflict, but also provide the framework for the reconstruction of political, legal, economic and social structures. Their content has a direct bearing on women's participation in formal peace negotiations and post-conflict peacebuilding. Explicit attention to the participation of women and reflection of gender perspectives in such agreements are crucial to ensure that such agreements fully address the gender-specific consequences of armed conflict, the concerns, needs and priorities of women and girls in the aftermath of conflict, and their participation in the reconstruction of post-conflict societies, and thus in the prevention of future conflict. In the case of the Kofi Annan mediation process, women were excluded, a shame, considering the team's work was an AU and other UN agencies mandated process.

In line with Sen's view of development as freedom, I too, see peace as freedom – not only as the primary end of peace, but as one of its principal means. Placing freedom at the centre stage of peace paves the way for people, especially the marginalised in society, to participate actively in shaping their own destiny.⁵¹ While addressing solutions to peacebuilding, it is paramount to remove the

major sources of unfreedom: exploitation of one group by another, poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic [and institutional] social deprivation, neglect of public utilities as well as intolerance or over activity of repressive states.⁵²

Real peace should be seen to enhance the lives people lead and the freedoms they enjoy. This is about giving economics, politics, cultural and social agenda a 'human' face, thus enhancing the quality of life for all – as opposed to simply addressing peace in terms of cessation of war.

In Kenya and most of Africa, women and poverty are joined at the hip! According to Sen, lack of substantive freedoms, such as peace, at times has a direct relationship with economic poverty, 'which robs people of the freedom to satisfy hunger, or to achieve sufficient nutrition, or to obtain remedies for treatable illnesses, or the opportunity to be adequately clothed, or sheltered, or to enjoy clean water, or sanitary facilities'.⁵³ Poverty is not simply a shortage of income. Other primary goods that help people promote their ends, such as 'rights, liberties and opportunities, income and wealth, and the social bases of self-respect', are critical aspects of freedom, the lack of which leads to war.⁵⁴ This was one cause of conflict in Kenya in 2008. Some impoverished youth accepted payment to destroy property and kill fellow Kenyans.

Although inequalities are structurally and socially constructed, they are not socially attractive and they do erode social cohesion. According to Sen, freedom to political participation, and the opportunity to receive basic education or health care are indirect contributors to not only the growth of the gross national product and industrialisation, which in turn contributes to economic growth, but also to peace.⁵⁵ Human development has an impact on the quality of life, improves people's productive abilities and enhances economic growth. Female education and improvement of child care, reduction in fertility rates and infant mortality and participation in decision-making and economic development are interrelated issues and all count for enhancing peace in times of post-war reconstruction.

Sen's analysis is important for this paper because although he recognizes the importance of the market in a nation's development agenda, he puts greater emphasis on enhancing people's freedom to enter the market, as it yields a substantive contribution to development; '...economic unfreedom, in the form of extreme poverty, can make a person a helpless prey in the violation of other kinds of freedom.'⁵⁶ For instance, single mothers in post-conflict situations have unprotected sex with their customers who resist the use of condoms because they lack the power to bargain for safe sex because of poverty. Kenyan women living in IDP camps confess that after losing all their property in the Rift Valley, they have no option but to sleep with truck drivers so that they can make some money.⁵⁷ These people have experienced various forms of unfreedom: ethnic violence, lack of food and shelter, undernourishment, little access to health care, sanitation and clean water, inadequate government protection of their

rights and gender inequality. One woman whose daughter was raped and who received no help from the local government administration when she reported the case said in a personal interview that she would sleep with truck drivers to make money to buy a gun to kill the man who had molested her daughter.

In the end, what will bring real freedom to Kenya are home-grown approaches to peacebuilding that are embedded in holistic (bottom-up, up-bottom, cyclic) peace strategies that link peacebuilding to all aspects of human development, human rights, especially women's human rights and human security; and economic, political, cultural and social empowerment of those excluded at present.

Inclusion of women in peace processes is critical

In the past decade, many countries have embarked upon the difficult transition from armed conflict towards resolution and peacebuilding. The international community's role in this transition has shifted from narrow humanitarian and relief activities to more comprehensive efforts to foster and entrench sustainable peace. Development organisations have become increasingly engaged in grassroots activities during post-conflict interventions, including more voices from the ground.

A significant transition in the arena of conflict transformation and peacebuilding has been the recognition at the highest level – the UN Security Council – of the need to commit to the continuing and full implementation by states of Resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), and 1882 (2009);⁵⁸ the development of UNSCR 1325 national action plans and ensuring the full, equal and effective participation of women at all stages of peace processes; given their role in the prevention and resolution of conflict and peacebuilding, the key role women can play in re-establishing the fabric of recovering society and their involvement in the development and implementation of post-conflict strategies.

It is increasingly recognised that the role and participation of women before, during and in post-conflict settings, which has hitherto received inadequate policy attention locally and internationally, needs to be taken into account for sustainable peace to become a reality in the world today. It is also clear that efforts to address women's exclusion and the particular impact of conflict on women need to be comprehensive and long-lasting. Women must play an active role in all the relevant processes and decision-making mechanisms.

In order to prevent conditions that give rise to violent conflict from thriving, empowered members of societies must be created: engaging citizens in peace dialogues at all times, and in particular once early warning signs are detected. Women's roles in promoting security, well-being and social justice causes provide examples of their commitment to preventing the emergence, spread or recurrence of violence.⁵⁹

Women do not respond in a similar manner in a given situation and although many are nurturers, some are not 'natural peace builders'.⁶⁰ Gender identity must always be contextualised, that is, it must be viewed in relationship with an individual's other

identities such as his or her ethnicity, class, age, nation, region, education and religion. It is important to note that gender roles may shift with social upheaval.

Despite the existence of 'sexism' or 'patriarchy' in a country such as Kenya, there are widely accepted reasons why women's inclusion in all peacebuilding processes is critical. Women are important because they constitute half of the population, and the task of peacebuilding must be undertaken in partnership with women, youth and men. In addition, women are the central caretakers of families and everyone is affected when women are oppressed and excluded.

As contemporary battles have moved from fields to the bodies of women through systemic rapes and forced service to military men, approaches to peacebuilding and conflict resolution in post-conflict situations must change too. D.T. Agbalajobi asserts that:

Armed conflict and its aftermath affect women's lives in ways that differ from the impact on men. Men in communities under attack tend to abandon public spaces to avoid being conscripted, attacked, or taken hostage. This increases the burden placed on women to hold communities together in the absence of men at war. On the other hand, women as symbols of community and/or ethnic identity may become the targets of extensive sexual violence. Conflict in some places has highlighted the use of rape as a tool of warfare. In Rwanda, women were raped as a means of ethnic cleansing, serving not only to terrorize individual victims but also to inflict collective terror on an ethnic group.⁶¹

During the 2007/2008 post-election violence in Kenya, women and children comprised 98 per cent of those in IDP camps. Generally in wars waged around the world today, and Africa specifically, one weapon used against women is sexual violence and rape.⁶² Kenya was no exception. After the peace agreement was signed, incidents of rape and other forms of violence continued to jeopardise women's security, especially in the IDP camps. After the conflict, there was an increase in female-headed households as gender roles switched. In addition, there was an increase in dependants that women had to look after, a decrease in the nutritional intake of women, and mass displacement.

Women took on more responsibilities as they took care of elders and abandoned children – including their own. Husbands were often absent. When I went to take food and clothes to IDPs in Nakuru in February 2008, one woman told me that she was going to follow me. I thought she was joking. The next time I went back, she was ready with her children to follow me to Meru, many miles from her Molo home. I asked her to give me a week to go and prepare a place for her. One week later, she arrived in Meru at midnight, with her children and a sack three quarters full of her worldly possessions. She found one of her lost sons one year later and she has never seen her husband since. Mama Isaac now lives in Meru where she has established a business that she started with the support of International Peace Initiatives.

Mama Isaac's home is a good example of what happens to families once violence breaks out. Her family unit was broken down by displacement and separation. Many

women in IDP camps turn to prostitution to feed their children and support themselves. Because Kenya is perceived to be a peaceful nation, and because of her strategic positioning with regard to international security interests, the need to return to good order and peace inspired policy makers to resume ‘normalcy’ quickly and at all costs, even if this meant resettling women and children on uninhabitable land.

Inclusion of women in peacebuilding ensures the process goes beyond the male agenda of sharing power and making deals after war. When women bring their concerns for the children, the family and community, as well as their perspectives and experiences of war, they not only highlight the consequences of war but also ‘humanise’ the conflict by bringing the plight and experiences of survivors to the peace negotiation table. The psyche of violence seems to last for many generations unless a systematic and deliberate effort is made to help people transcend this mindset. The family and community units are the ground where this teaching can effectively take root, especially among children and young people.

As Heyzer aptly points out, ‘when women’s voices are heard and heeded, critical priorities that would otherwise be left out of peace processes are often reflected’.⁶³ Because some of the most entrenched social, cultural, political, and economic injustices are endured by women, ‘they must become leaders of communities and institutions, with the power to shape policies and agendas’.⁶⁴

Moreover, they have distinctive approaches and skills that affect the tone and dynamics of the process. While men will focus on brokering deals, sharing power and resources, women will address aspects that will help rebuild and secure their families and communities because they are on the frontline of coping with the consequences of violence.

In Isiolo district, Bibianne Balaf Darimo co-ordinates community policing, where citizens patrol the community and secure peace between the many ethnic groups living in the area. She says:

I mobilized women to work together to create a more peaceful and secure society. Women are very effective in policing because they know the identity of most of the criminals within the community. They work well with the police by providing them with vital information especially on the whereabouts of these criminals.⁶⁵

In Kenya for example, after the 2008 election violence broke out, many women and children were in IDP camps across the country. While most organisations went to assist people from a humanitarian standpoint, women from International Peace Initiatives organised peace circles with women in the camps. The women’s concerns hinged on their security and that of the girls (because of the high rate of rapes in the camps) and the feeding and education of their children.

Women also expand the negotiation agenda and show their strength and courage by using their experiences to inspire community members to stop killing one another. When inter-tribal conflicts arose in the pastoralist-dominated area town of Marsabit,

Northern Kenya, because of scarcity of resources (water and grazing ground), two community women formed an organisation known as the Marsabit Women for Advocacy and Development Organisation. This organisation organises and works with various women's groups to address inter-tribal violence in Marsabit, empower women to participate in decision-making processes and fight gender-based violence. One of the organisations they formed is known as Marsabit Women for Peace, made up of women who were affected by the 2005/06 Torbi Massacre. These women go around the community talking about their experiences and inspiring people to choose peace.

One of the women group members who work for peace in the area is Sori Sora, who lost her husband during the attacks. She refused to agree to a call for revenge from elders and chose to work for peace. Sori now speaks to elders and other community members to stop the violence because she says fighting cannot lead to anything but sorrow. Since elders and leaders know how she lost her husband, they listen to her when she tells them that enough is enough.⁶⁶

Peacebuilding approaches that are based on a view of women as helpless and passive develop limited interventions. Those that view women as capable and active participators in peacebuilding initiatives need to develop more complex approaches and build strong relationships among various actors and stakeholders.

Programme approaches and delivery and programme results on the ground all change depending on the perception of women one has. When women are perceived as helpless and passive, programmatic approaches are linear and top-down. Approaches are also militaristic, with a security focus and are government/state-centred. This means that there are fewer actors and fewer voices and these are centralised and controlled. Solutions are thus prescriptive, transplanted and imposed from above and from outside the community.

Approaches are also elite and expert-centred and based on presuming that needs are understood. No needs assessments are undertaken; the community to be served is not consulted. Programme results on the ground are thus disempowering, encourage dependency and de-motivate recipients of interventions.

It is important that those with the resources perceive women as capable, active survivors of war as opposed to helpless victims. In addition, their contributions to peacebuilding need to be recognised. When women's grassroots development and peacebuilding initiatives are based on the concerns and experiences of the women and their context, peacebuilding approaches shift actors and stakeholders, and underline the importance of engaging with non-state actors, especially actors from the communities where violence took place.⁶⁷

When women from different ethnic groups, different ages, different levels of education, and so on, are brought together so that they can share their experiences – like the example of the Nairobi Peace Initiative – Africa (NPI-A) addressed above – new sites of power are created. Similar meetings can be carried out with men as well as between members of different ethnic groups, so that gender and community healing

and reconciliation can also take place. When these meetings take place, major shifts in people's perception of the 'other' occur, bringing about much needed understanding, reconciliation and healing.

The role of women in peacebuilding in Kenya: the case of 2007/2008 post-election violence

In this section, the author looks at specific initiatives that individual women, women's groups and organisations carried out and continue to carry out as a response to the post-election violence that took place in 2007/08. Specifically highlighted is the role of individual women, such as peace activist Ann Njeri, and organisations such as the NPI-A and International Peace Initiatives (IPI).

Women's roles during times of conflict are diverse. Some join the rebel groups or armies to fight alongside their men. In Isiolo, for example, according to Sori Sora, women are to blame for the violence:

... some women encourage their men to raid and kill – to prove their manhood and raise their reputation in the community. ... Women sing songs encouraging men to fight because the most beautiful girls want to marry men who have proven themselves as warriors.⁶⁸

Women may also choose to support their warriors through provision of nursing services to injured soldiers. Some become spies and others serve as soldiers.⁶⁹

My position is that although women do play a part in perpetuating violence, my experience and observations as a peacebuilding practitioner and scholar in Kenya and abroad point to the fact that the majority of women will choose nonviolent resolution of conflict and peaceful coexistence with others in communities. In addition, women are driven by necessity to stop the deaths of their sons, husbands, brothers, and fathers; destruction of property; and disintegration of communities. Whereas most wars are started by men, women are increasingly playing critical roles to end them and to rebuild broken relationships and reconcile communities.

Ann Njeri Ndiangui, initiatives of change, Nakuru

Ann Njeri Ndiangui is a young lady with a big heart and passion for peace in Africa.⁷⁰ When the election violence erupted in 2008, Njeri was very worried because she did not know where her parents and the family would go. Their home is situated next to the Kalenjin, an ethnic group, in the Nakuru area of Kenya. Although some of Njeri's 'best friends' have been Kalenjin girls, she informed me that her mother always told them never to trust Kalenjins. She carried a deep hatred for Kalenjins, one of the ethnic groups evicting Kikuyus from Western Kenya. Although she carried this hatred in her heart, she had Kalenjin friends, whom she realised she did not like or trust at all. However, she did not have the courage to tell them the truth. One day in 2008, as Njeri was thinking about her role as a peacemaker and what she could do to bring about

peace, she realised that she first had to find peace and healing in her heart. She therefore decided to tell her friends the truth about how she felt about them and promised to change. She also decided to visit her friends in Kalenjin land.

She was very well received at her friends' home and this really surprised Njeri, who told me: 'I realized they are not only people like me, but they [are] also very friendly because they gave me a wonderful reception. Not all Kalenjins hate us, I realised.'⁷¹ Njeri shared with them why she had visited them and there were many conversations about ways in which people can build peace in communities together. She went back home and invited the family to visit her. She was worried her father and mother might refuse to accept a visit from the other family, but she tried anyway. When the family came, they had a wonderful time and to Njeri's pleasant surprise, her parents said they would visit the Kalenjin family.

Njeri's action reveals important aspects of how women work. Njeri first found peace so that she could spread peace to others. She chose to see the humanity of the 'other' people and decided to apologise and visit them, to show she was genuine about her desire to make peace with her Kalenjin friends. She made the courageous step to confess to the 'other' that she had not been sincere in her relationship with them and she wanted to change that. She chose to use her empowerment to reach out to the other family and in so doing transformed stereotypes that Kikuyus hold against Kalenjins and vice versa.

Nairobi peace initiative – Africa

On 22 and 23 March 2010, 35 Kenyan civil society and political women met to reflect on lessons learnt on women's participation during the Kofi Annan-led mediation process of February 2008. This was a research project investigating women's participation in the Kenyan Mediation Process organised by the NPI-A. The round table and research found that women were not aware of legal frameworks (the Constitution of Kenya, UNSCR 1325, and the Africa Protocol on Women, Peace and Development, for example) in place that support their demands for inclusion in decision-making and peacebuilding processes in Kenya. They also heard that women felt helpless and did not know what to do or how they could help once violence broke out.

The round table concluded that there was a need for increased training on United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 for Kenyan women to ensure they understood issues relating to peace, security and conflict as these affect women. With such understanding, women will be able to participate actively in conflict prevention and other peace and security processes in Kenya. Although there is still a lot of resistance from governments and diplomatic circles to implement the Resolution, its adoption was a critical milestone and tool that women can use to leverage their inclusion in decision-making processes at all levels, internationally and in their countries.

Through the activism of the NPI-A, some women leaders and civil society women were able to meet with the former South African First Lady, Graça Machel,

to share their views about the mediation process and their exclusion from the main peace negotiations. The NPI-A convened a meeting of women leaders from all over Kenya, to share ideas about the way forward for women in Kenya. Florence Mpaayei, the executive director of the NPI-A, informed me⁷² that when women were given an opportunity to introduce themselves and talk a little about their experiences, they were surprised at the amount of emotion that sharing brought. The meeting proved to be all about listening to one another, crying together as people re-lived their hurt and loss, and comforting one another.

The set agenda of the meeting that day was not touched. In her words, Ms Mpaayei stated that they

realised no voice could be stopped because emotions were very high. Every story needed to be heard. Everyone needed to share their experiences in order for healing to begin. Everyone listened, cried, and empathised. In the end there was a feeling of release, possibility of forgiveness and the beginning of healing as people hugged and comforted each other.⁷³

She also informed me that when women from different ethnic groups learned about the suffering and loss of the others, there was a new sense of recognition of the common pain they all had and the suffering and loss of livelihoods, family, property, and trust.

People who once lived as neighbours no longer trusted one another. There was deep sadness at the loss of the sense of community that had existed in Kenya before 2007/08. The women at the NPI-A meeting finally ‘got it’ – they understood that ‘my pain is your pain’ and that carrying the pain and hatred was only going to make things worse for themselves, their families, communities and Kenya as a whole. They also realised that peace must begin with each one of them. Within this humbling recognition of how intricately each one’s fate is bound with the others’, the women resolved to work together to bring reconciliation and healing into their lives, families and communities. The women also committed to ensuring that they would engage a proactive approach to peacebuilding in the next general election year (2012/13) in order to prevent a recurrence of 2008 in Kenya.

International peace initiatives

One local non-governmental organisation that has been involved in grassroots peacebuilding in Kenya is IPI. IPI works in Kenya, Africa and around the world to mitigate the impact of violence, poverty and disease in the lives of women and children. IPI has developed a model of peacebuilding that empowers individuals and communities to take responsibility for the change they want to see in their lives and communities. The guiding principle of this approach is ‘peace begins with me.’ IPI recognises that if people have no peace within them, they cannot share peace with others because people cannot give to others what they do not have in and for themselves. IPI also works on the premise that attaining sustainable peace is possible as long as people are educated and

empowered to recognise their role in enabling sustainable peace in their lives, families and the community. International Peace Initiatives clearly exemplifies a proactive approach based on IPI's strategic pillars: education, enterprise and empowerment.

Education refers to all those ways in which people's capabilities and knowledge are developed and enhanced through workshops, seminars, schools' peace clubs, circles of peace known as '*The Way of Peace*', sharing stories, reading, using social networks and the internet, attending formal classes, developing community peace forums and dialogues, and so forth. Enterprise refers to those activities that emerge as a result of the knowledge attained through education – activities that enhance the economic and social freedoms of an individual person, family or community.

Empowerment has to do with enhancing the ability of people to *know* who they are, *find* and *embrace* their power, *build* and *attain* self-reliance and be able to DO and BE all these within themselves, family and community. This is possible within the context of *ubuntu* – the essence of being human. In my view, *ubuntu* speaks of humaneness, the ability to dialogue with self and others, gentleness, hospitality, generosity, putting oneself out on behalf of others, and being vulnerable. *Ubuntu* embraces compassion and toughness and recognises that my humanity is intricately bound with that of the 'other': for we can only be human together in community. The principle of *ubuntu* must stand both as the cornerstone and laid down as the foundation for each individual, family and every community.

International Peace Initiatives was established in 2003. A programme of IPI, the Institute of Nonviolence and Peace (INPEACE), whose motto is: 'Peace begins with me', provides alternative peacebuilding approaches that are participatory, gender-empowered and human rights-based through training in Kenya, Africa and around the world and by disseminating peace-related information and the results of peace research. INPEACE conducts peace education in schools, transformative conferences and workshops, and community dialogues and peace forums. INPEACE also funds special projects that promote peace across diverse communities and participates in facilitating international peacebuilding initiatives that are premised on a social justice, gender and human rights framework.

When the post-election violence broke out, IPI engaged in a number of initiatives to respond to the situation. In Nakuru, IPI initiated *The Way of Peace* circles with women in one of the IDP camps. In Meru, where violence did not break out in a big way, IPI facilitated a peace dialogue with various community stakeholders in the district. On national level, IPI initiated the '*Pre-empting election violence in Kenya in 2012: Women and youth building nonviolent communities*'. The goal of this intervention is to work with women as mentors and partners with youth in peacebuilding around Kenya.

The way of peace circles

The *Way of Peace* circles were initiated to heal the wound we had inflicted on our psyches as a nation. I remembered Mahatma Gandhi's statement that 'There is no way to peace,

peace is the way', and desired to offer a workshop for the women in IDP camps as a way to share their experiences, hopes, fears and plans for the future. In spite of their predicament, the author wanted women to recognise that they are the ones who could begin the process of healing in our nation and that healing had to begin with them. It was important for the women in the IDP camp to KNOW that they could create a future through sharing and thinking together. Indeed, it was during one of these peace circles that I met Mama Isaac who was able to create a future for herself and her children in Meru, where she is a successful business woman today.

Pre-empting election violence in Kenya in 2013: women and youth building nonviolent communities

Women and youth suffered greatly during the violence. Women were displaced, lost their husbands and other family members, were raped and lost their entire livelihood. Youth were paid to wreak havoc on people in 2007/08. They were paid very little money, but given alcohol and drugs so that they could destroy people's property and kill others. Many youth lost their lives and their reputation in the community. Unemployment and economic imbalances in relation to youth in society were cited as some of the causes of the violence, so the youth were said to be fighting for their rights. Today we still have high unemployment rates among the youth and the economic imbalances are wider than ever before in Kenya.

One aim of this programme is to highlight the role of women and youth in peacebuilding in Kenya. We wanted to involve women – in partnership with youth – to speak with one another, bridge the generational and gender gap and together see how they can partner to build nonviolent communities in their regions. In addition, the programme aimed to build economic empowerment and understanding among youth so that they would accept their role in peacebuilding and development in their country. *'Pre-empting election violence in 2013'* is an initiative of Kenyan women and youth organising for peace before, during and after the next general elections in 2013, as a result of the 2008 post-election violence experience. The goal of this intervention is to craft a strategy to ensure that violence does not break out before, during and after the general elections.

In December 2011, women and youth, as well as men interested in peace in Kenya, were gathered and trained on how to convene community peace forums at a national conference meeting. After the training conference, participants went back to their constituencies to train other community members on how to convene community peace forums.

Conclusion

Women played an important role in the mediation process in Kenya in 2008, first as activists and advocates for peace. They dealt with conflict non-violently by pursuing

democracy, human rights and justice for all. Working with the Red Cross, women also acted as peacekeepers and relief aid workers, thus contributing to reducing direct violence. Many also played the role of informal mediators, trauma-healing counsellors and policymakers, working in these ways to ‘transform relationships’ and address the root causes of the violence. In the IDP camps many women were educators and participants in the development process, thus contributing to building the capacity of their communities and nation to prevent violent conflict. Women’s socialisation processes, the historical experience of unequal relations and values that women bring to the process of peacebuilding enable them to bring a unique lens to the negotiation table.

The 2008 crisis in Kenya was a wakeup call to every Kenyan to think about our role as individuals and have zero tolerance for violence in Kenya and Africa at large – to ask what my vocation is in the areas of ending conflicts in my family, community, country and on the continent. By vocation I mean ‘that which stirs inside calling out to be heard, calling out to be followed, and vocation is not what I do, it finds its root in which I am, and a sense of purpose I have on earth’.⁷⁴

The women presented in this chapter and their approach to peacebuilding underline the new thinking that is needed to transform, not merely manage, conflict. They chose to meet the ‘enemy’ face to face and to engage in dialogue – sincere one-on-one and heart-to-heart conversation with another person. They also chose to invite other community or family members to participate in the dialogue or event created to talk about the conflict. Njeri not only went to visit her friends’ home, she in turn invited them to visit her family. Her parents were involved and inspired enough to agree to visit the Kalenjin family too. The Marsabit women also invited men to join them in talking about ways of sharing the water and grazing land resources.

The role women play in peacebuilding begins in their families and community – they begin from where they intimately know the issues on the ground. They also speak from their own experiences and support survivors of violence to speak for themselves.

Recommendations

- Institutions such as the UN, IGAD, AU, Kenyan government and international agencies need to ensure systematic attention and actions to increase women’s representation in their organisations and include women in decision-making processes as a matter of priority. These institutions also need to ensure incorporation and implementation of UNSCR 1325 in all policy and decision-making arms of their institutions in order to set an example for other agencies and governments around the world.
- The UN, AU, IGAD and governments need to prioritise activities that specify in detail women and girls’ needs and priorities and design concrete strategies in line with legal frameworks in place, to address these needs and priorities to ensure greater physical security, better socio-economic conditions through education, income-

generating activities, access to basic services such as health services (including sexual and reproductive health), reproductive rights, mental health, gender-responsive law enforcement (that helps eliminate impunity, cultural practices and laws that discriminate against women and girls) and access to justice and education, as well as enhancing capacity to engage in public decision-making at all levels.

- The UN, IGAD, AU and governments should as a matter of priority take responsibility to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for all forms of violence committed against women and girls and young boys in armed conflict, including rape and other sexual violence; put in place systems to protect women and girls where they have to testify; increase the number of women in positions of leadership (including in peacekeeping missions) and provide funding to support building the capabilities of communities to spearhead entrenchment of cultures of peace for themselves.
- Concerted efforts should be made by states and development partners to build women's information communication technology skills to create their own media using new technologies in order to highlight their peace and development initiatives, as well as raise their voices on issues important to them.
- Institutions and governments should empower women and support their participation during all stages of peacebuilding, including enhancement of their engagement in political and economic decision-making at all times; particularly in the early stages of recovery, healing, reconciliation and integration processes, by promoting and supporting women's leadership and capacity to engage in aid management and planning, supporting women's organisations to participate in all stages of peacebuilding, and countering negative societal attitudes about women's capacity to participate equally.

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women also play a role in perpetuating violence and supporting warriors, as well as taking up arms and going to fight.

- 70 Personal interview with Ann Njeri Ndiangui in February, 2012. She is an activist who believes in the wellness of every human being. She works with Initiatives of Change Kenya in peacebuilding and conflict transformation and is the communications officer for Africa. She is one of the international coordinators for Creators of Peace Programme (a women's peace initiative for women around the world) and is a great campaigner for 'No Tribalism' in Kenya, a campaign that she started in 2007. She has attended many local and international events, including the Caux Human Security forum in Switzerland, Tools for Change Conference in Malaysia, International Day of Peace in Australia, Eastern Africa Youth Conference in Kenya, among others, at which she has spoken on issues of leadership, peace and social responsibility.
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Women's involvement in peace and security: the case of the SANDF

Ntsiki Memela-Motumi

Introduction

In view of the promulgation of various international protocols and national policies on women's involvement in peace and security, this chapter seeks to examine policy implementation and further traces women's participation in defence of their territories from the 17th century to date. The South African experience is cited as a case study and best practice on how women's participation in the struggle for an equal, non-racist and non-sexist society has earned them the right to participate in all spheres of society, including combat roles.

Reasons for women's enlistment in the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) are examined, as well as their personal experiences and the positive message of equality and non-discrimination that is conveyed through their role as peacekeepers. Effective strategies pursued in the advancement of gender equality in this arena are highlighted and the deduction made is that women's participation in peacebuilding processes is indeed an essential element in the promotion of sustainable post-conflict reconstruction and development.

Background

In the world today, there is growing realisation that limiting women's access to resources and decision-making, limits their ability to develop and exercise their full capabilities for their own benefit and that of society. This has prompted efforts to equalise opportunities for both women and other vulnerable groups. In the South African context, the former president, Mr Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, echoed these sentiments in his opening address to Parliament on 24 May 1994:¹

Freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression. To this end, we have acknowledged that the objectives of our reconstruction and development will not be realised unless we see invisible and practical terms that the condition of women in our country has radically changed for the better, and that women at every level have been empowered to intervene in all aspect of life as equals with any other member of the society. My government is committed to a reallocation of resources to ensure the achievement of this objective.

Equality clause

The above quotation clarifies the message that development cannot take place if it excludes half of the human race.² The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa has institutionalised key mechanisms to advance gender equality in this country. The substantive notion of equality is entered in Section 9, the equality clause, where section 9(2) states that:

- a) Equality includes the equal enjoyment of all the rights and freedoms to promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination.

The equality clause further includes specific prohibition of gender-related forms of discrimination, including discrimination on the grounds of gender, sex, pregnancy and marital status.

It is thus important to note that according to the Constitution, positive measures form part of equality. In other words, without positive measures addressing systemic inherited inequalities, there is no equality. Affirmative action or the empowerment of women in this regard would not constitute a tolerable aberration from equality, but an essential element of the achievement of equality.

Since its re-entry into the international scene, following the demise of formal apartheid, South Africa has voluntarily also ratified and signed various international instruments relating to the advancement of women, women's human rights and gender equality.³ The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women gives guidance on anti-discrimination measures, to eradicate pre-existing systemic structural inequalities, which undermine women's equal enjoyment of rights, freedoms and opportunities.

Secondly, the Beijing Platform of Action has specific provisions that focus on measures that deal specifically with mainstreaming gender in armed conflict.⁴ The key provisions in this regard are to increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels; protect women living in situations of armed and other conflict under foreign occupation; promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations; promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace and provide protection; and assist in training to refugee women and other disabled women in need of international protection.

Thirdly, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 also underscores the importance of mainstreaming gender in situations of armed conflict and peacekeeping.⁵ Some of the key issues cover the integration of a gender perspective in all peacekeeping and peace-building measures, including peace agreements and decision-making processes; including measures to address the special needs of women and girls in all post-conflict and peace arrangements; implementing guidelines and measures on the protection of women and children; and involving women in all peace-keeping and peace-building measures, including decision-making.

Fourthly, the Namibian Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations, adopted in Windhoek, Namibia in 2000, focuses on peacekeeping and armed conflict challenges.⁶ Its provisions include policy pronouncements on mainstreaming gender and involving women at all levels and in all peacekeeping processes and decision-making, by advocating equal access and participation of women and men in the area of conflict resolution at all levels and stages of peace processes; that women are an integral part of all of negotiation teams and processes relating to ceasefire or peace agreements; that the initial assessment mission of any peace-support operation should include a senior advisor on gender mainstreaming; that assessment reports should include gender mainstreaming; that having an adequately funded and staffed gender affairs unit should be regarded as a standard component of all missions; and that gender must be mainstreamed in all training of peace officials, including troops.⁷

The SADC Declaration on Gender and Development, and the Addendum on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women and Children specifically stipulate a 30 per cent target for women's involvement at all levels of decision-making and also include their representation in the armed forces and peacekeeping operations.

Last but not least, the AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, adopted by the African heads of state in Addis Ababa in 2004, provides for the pursuit of gender parity, referred to as 50/50 representation of women and men in all AU operations and decision-making structures.⁸ It also deals with measures to end the recruitment of child soldiers and abuse of girls, as wives and as sex slaves.

Women to the fore

Pre-colonial history teaches that in the 17th century, Chieftainess Hoho, a Khoi leader of the Eastern Cape, was a female warrior and commander of great ability.⁹ In the late 18th century, the Sotho chieftainess, Mantatisi, was another renowned military commander who sent shock waves among her adversaries through her astute military strategies and tactics. In Ghana, Yaa Asantewa of the Ashanti Empire, the brave queen mother of Ejisu, fought against colonial invasion and in the mobilisation of her people she demanded:

Is it true that the bravery of the Ashanti is no more? I cannot believe it. It cannot be! I must say this, if you the men of the Ashanti will not go forward, then, we the women will. I shall call upon my fellow women. We will fight the white men. We will fight till the last of us falls in the battlefields.¹⁰

The African National Congress (ANC) was formed a century ago on 8 January 1912. Subsequently the women's rights pioneer, Charlotte Maxeke, a highly skilled and professional woman, led women's protests in the Free State resisting the then government's attempt to impose passes on women in 1913. The women burnt passes in front of the municipal offices – a courageous act of defiance at a time when the

repressive government of the Union of South Africa was consolidating its authority under General Louis Botha.

The Women's Charter

Women continued to link their struggle for citizenship and equality to political and economic struggles. A critical mass of women across racial and class lines was ultimately mobilised to form the Federation of South African Women in 1954. They drew up a Women's Charter, which pledged to bring discriminatory laws to an end.

The Women's Charter articulated the problems women encountered with the law and the gender-oppressive framework that prevailed at the time. One of the significant passages of the Women's Charter reads:

The law has become an obstacle to the progress of women and therefore a brake to the whole society. This intolerable condition would not be allowed to continue if it were not for the refusal of a large section of our men folk to concede to us women the rights and privileges which they demand for themselves. We shall teach them that they cannot hope to liberate themselves from the evils of discrimination and prejudice as long as they fail to extend to women complete and unqualified equality in law and practise.¹¹

It was this continued organisation and mobilisation that resulted in the historic 1956 march where 20 000 women, led by Lillian Ngoyi, Sophie de Bruin, Amina Cachalia and Helen Joseph, took women's struggle for freedom and democracy to a higher level. The women stated their resolve that they would never give up the fight until the dawn of freedom and they declared: 'We shall not rest until we have won for our children their fundamental rights of freedom, justice and security.'

In later years, women also participated heroically in all four pillars of the struggle, namely mass mobilisation, armed operations, underground structures and international solidarity. They served as combatants and leaders on all these fronts, leading to the period of transition in the early 1990s.

The 1990 turning point

After the unbanning of political organisations and the release of political prisoners in 1990, women continued to organise themselves across political lines. As the process unfolded, it became clear that for women to occupy their seat at the negotiation table, they needed to be organised so as to ensure that their voices were heard in the setting of the agenda for a new South Africa. They worked under the auspices of the National Coalition of Women, which brought together women from diverse political affiliations and non-governmental organisations and campaigned for representation. Women also determined the destiny of this nation by making critical submissions, which were subsequently incorporated into the new Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Last but not least, the women of South Africa have, through the spousal office and the Office of the Status of Women, both in the Presidency, spearheaded programmes that sought to assist women emerging from conflict-ridden countries in Africa. In this regard workshops that shared lessons taught, encouraged and inspired women to participate actively in the reconstruction and development processes in their countries. The South African Women in Dialogue also played a major role in facilitating dialogue between women from opposing camps, for example the dialogue with women of Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

From transition to integration

In the defence arena, following the enactment of the Transitional Executive Council Act in September 1993¹² a number of sub-councils were established to report to this entity, one of these being the Sub-council on Defence whose brief was to oversee the military transition process. Central to this task was the planning of the integration of all armed formations represented at the negotiations. The ultimate goal was to design a military for South Africa that would be affordable, effective and legitimate.

However, the details of the integration process were hammered out by the Joint Military Coordinating Committee (JMCC), consisting of representatives from all the participating armed forces, statutory and non-statutory. The so-called statutory forces consisted of those forces that had been established by the governments in place at the time, i.e. the South African Defence Force and the armed forces of the nominally independent homelands of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei. The so-called non-statutory forces consisted of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the military wing of the ANC, and the Azanian People's Liberation Army of the Pan-Africanist Congress.

The activities of the JMCC comprised a unique joint planning exercise, involving previously implacable enemies. The JMCC elected two chairmen who took the chair in rotation, namely the Chief of the SADF, General George Meiring, and the Chief of Staff of MK, General Siphiwe Nyanda. Various work groups dealing with different aspects of defence were established, of which one consisted of women from the statutory and non-statutory forces. The aim of the work group was to influence policy in order to ensure that the future SANDF would become gender-sensitive in all aspects and free of discrimination based on gender.

Women as combatants

The most difficult issue that had to be negotiated was to allow women to serve in combat. It was argued that women's participation in all forms of military service was as crucial as their involvement in all spheres of society. It was thus imperative to seize this historic moment of shaping future SANDF policy so as to be able to open all doors of opportunities for women. The result of this policy formulation exercise was a policy document on the utilisation of women in the SANDF, which was subsequently endorsed by the Command Council of the newly formed SANDF.

The women of South Africa have seized the opportunities that existed and have today taken an active role as political, business and civil society leaders, and thereby contribute to the resolution of conflicts and socio-economic development in the country and on the continent. In addition, a number of senior women, including the Minister of International Relations and Co-operation, are involved in peacekeeping and preventive diplomacy related to decision-making on the continent and in other areas on a regular basis. Indeed, a significant part of our history has been about women of courage, who fought against injustices and challenged social barriers for acceptance and recognition as equals and leaders in a patriarchal society.

Constitutional gender obligations

The redefinition of security, from being state-centred to human security, and the realignment of the role of the SANDF in a democratic framework have ensured that both women and men participate fully in the provision of the envisaged security.¹³ Reflecting this position, the Ministry of Defence expressed commitment to align itself to the South African Constitution and the international prescripts on issues relating to gender equity and human rights. Specifically, there has been commitment to the following aspects: increasing the representation of women in all ranks in the SANDF, accepting women to serve in combat roles and providing gender-sensitive education and training to all DOD personnel without exception.

‘The primary object of the Defence Force as a constitutional injunction is to defend and protect the Republic, its territorial integrity and its people in accordance with the Constitution and the principles of international law regulating the use of force.’¹⁴ Equality and consequently gender mainstreaming, are implied in:

- a) the ‘people’ that includes men and women,
- b) the ‘Constitution’ infuses the principle of equality, and
- c) ‘international law’ includes gender dimensions thereof.

The UN has deployed 61 peacekeeping operations into conflict and post-conflict situations since 1948.¹⁵ In earlier deployments, peacekeepers were tasked with monitoring cease-fires. However, in recent years, the scope of peacekeeping has widened to include multi-disciplinary civilian and police components, as well as multi-dimensional missions involving electoral processes, human rights monitoring and civil affairs functions.

Women as victims of war

The transformation of peacekeeping has entailed two fundamental gender issues, one relating to women as victims of conflict and the other as victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers.¹⁶ It is thus significant to note that a century ago, 90 per cent of war casualties were male soldiers. There have been 250 major conflicts since World

War II, resulting in 23 million casualties. Today an estimated 90 per cent of casualties are civilians, and 75 per cent of these are estimated to be women and children. In wars where rape and the mutilation of women were epidemic, as in the case of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Rwanda, Sudan and DRC, countless women still live with physical and emotional war wounds. So widespread is violence against women that such abuses have been classified as war crimes.

These statistics, more than anything else, indicate that vulnerable populations should be the focus of international peace operations. Consequently the skills required from peacekeepers must be different from traditional peacekeeping operations. The integration of a gender perspective into all aspects of peacekeeping thus constitutes an important strategy to support inclusive and sustainable peace in a post-conflict environment.

Notwithstanding the enlarged mandates of peacekeeping missions in recent decades, the profile of uniformed peacekeepers has remained overwhelmingly male because of the limited number of women serving in the military and civilian police functions in the countries that contribute troops and police.¹⁷ The Minister of Defence reiterated on 25 May 2006 during a Women in Defence Conference that women must play a full and equal role in all aspects of the Department of Defence. A key aspect of this role is the involvement of women in military operations, because it is the core business of this organisation.

Gender stereotypes

At this August gathering, cognisance was taken of the fact that defence forces the world over have been monopolised by males and ruled by gender stereotyping owing to the physical strength required and the type of equipment used.¹⁸ Kronsels has described the military 'as an institution of hegemonic masculinity where certain masculine ideologies are entrenched as normative prescriptive.'¹⁹ Enloe, on the other hand, has reputedly said 'men are the military; women are in the military.' It therefore becomes significant and noteworthy to explore factors that motivate women to serve in this arena.²⁰ A survey conducted in 2007 to determine women's reasons for joining the SANDF highlighted the following key themes:

Patriotism and the desire to defend and serve the country featured prominently in the motivation of many women to join this institution.

- *I wanted to make a difference in my country as a woman in the SANDF.* (Corporal, SA Army)
- *I wanted experience in the SANDF.* (Lance Corporal, SA Army)

Many women joined in order to pursue a career in the military, some of whom related that they had always dreamed of being a soldier.

- *I needed a career, not a job. I needed a challenge in life.* (Corporal, SA Army)
- *It was my childhood dream to become a soldier.* (Corporal, SA Air Force)

Others expressed consciousness that the military is a ‘man’s world’ and cited this as the reason for their joining.

- *I wanted to know how it feels to be in a man’s world.* (Sergeant, SA Military Health Service)

Certainly, some women did report joining in order to obtain a job – a feature of the socio-economic situation of most South Africans, both male and female. Poverty and high unemployment rates mean that any available job is better than no job. This is also consistent with international professionalisation of the military – that it is less of a calling or vocation and more of a job that pays the rent.

In combination, however, these responses point to a majority of women joining the military with the intent of claiming a space for themselves as soldiers. A few of these have conceptualised their joining in explicitly gendered terms.

The question of women’s participation in peace and security was also examined in respect of the unique contributions that they make on this terrain.

Theme	Sample statements
<i>Interpersonal and relational skills</i>	They know how to calm a member who might be negative; Women are good supporters; Conflict is less on board; Women are able to solve conflicts better than men; Willingness to cooperate; Many of the men just need to discuss problems/ private matters from home and prefer to talk to a woman who can understand.
<i>Emotional and affective skills</i>	Women are sometimes able to keep a level head (remain calm); Their perseverance in long and difficult tasks; Character and personality are stronger; Handle stress better; Women are stronger than men emotionally and have more patience.
<i>Conceptual and cognitive skills</i>	Women are sometimes able to see the bigger picture; They can make decisions and are good planners; They are more focussed; Better organisational ability.
<i>Executive and task-oriented skills</i>	Multitasking ability; Practicality.

<i>Commitment and excellence</i>	Dedication to their work; They are motivated; More determined and hard-working.
<i>Hygiene</i>	They (women) are also generally tidier (neat) and the men tend to be neater too; They are more hygiene-conscious.
<i>Women have no unique characteristics</i>	Nothing special; Nothing special 'because we do the same job'; I must know how to fix a chart or calculate sunrise/sunset and fulfil all the other tasks expected of soldiers.

Table 12.1: Women's characteristics

Women's interpersonal skills

The women in this study highlighted women's interpersonal skills as the most significant unique characteristic that women have that is different from men. They suggest that women have the ability to work effectively at the interface between people, bringing cooperation, conflict resolution and harmony to the team. They appear to take on a supportive, nurturing role in some instances – playing mother or sister to the men. They have a calming effect on a team that is stressed, irritable or tired.

Secondly, the participants highlighted the emotional and affective skills that women bring to operations. They describe women as calm and level-headed, patient and resilient. Women have perseverance and persistence. Women are able to cope and remain stable when under stress.

The third characteristic that the women in this study highlighted is not consistent with the stereotype. The participants argue that women have conceptual and cognitive skills that are unique and valuable. Women are able to think holistically, seeing the big picture and staying focused on strategic priorities. Women have good management skills; organising, decision-making, planning, and prioritising. While seeing the bigger picture, women also pay attention to the details, which makes them meticulous planners.

A small minority of women argued that they do not bring any unique characteristics to operations. Presumably, their concern is that the question about the 'characteristics of women' puts all women into a box and assumes that there are female characteristics that are distinct from male characteristics. These women argue that individuals have unique characteristics, and that their gender is irrelevant to the unique contribution that they can make to a deployment.

In a related question, women were asked, 'How does the presence of women influence a deployment/operation' and the themes mentioned below were highlighted:

Theme	Sample statements
Women have a generally positive influence on deployments	Most male colleagues appreciate it; Women in general bring a balance; Females are stronger than men; Women are performing and go the extra mile; It brings the 'softer touch' into the mission area; They [women] do not break curfews.
Women improve cohesion and morale in the team	Builds up moral[e]; They [women] encourage togetherness; Women tend to be more positive than men and that rubs off; Can keep a group together.
Women make calm and rational decisions	Seeing reasoning behind things and not just doing; Women will weigh up the pro's and con's and eventually make an educated decision based on facts, emotions and their intuition; Positively, can think more maturely and objectively.
Women provide support and counsel to the men	Men sometimes confide easier in women; Women are born mothers – they always comfort their male colleagues; We [women] make them [men] positive by giving them advice.
The presence of women makes no difference to deployments	There are no women in uniform. We are all soldiers, so a presence of a woman does not make any change in any situation; I don't really think it does, we are there to do a job same as the presence of men.
The presence of women facilitates gender equality	I think from a man's perspective we gain respect because of our abilities to cope with outside influences; Men respect us more, if we are all exposed to the same situation; Men and women are playing the same role as soldiers; It brings men and women down to the same level, nobody being inferior coping, he become[s] more determined to outshine the women.
Women promote better performance among men	If a man see[s] a woman can make it so can he, even if it's tough; When male comrades cannot handle the situation any longer, they push themselves motivated by the fact that they do not want to get beaten by a woman; Women have to work harder to prove themselves, so men do as well.

Women remain focused on the task at hand	It is more easy for the whole group to focus if the women are present; Women see it as a mission, not only for the financial reasons; Women are much focussed.
Women bring fun and socialising into the deployment	They [men] like to have women company on board, so as to break the boredom and make the situation lively.
Women contain men's bad behaviour	Men normally behave better, have better manners and use foul language less; It keeps the men in line.
Men have negative attitudes to women in deployment	Sometimes men are negative towards the women; If you are a leader and a woman they [are] suppose[d] to respect and listen to what you are going to say to them but sometimes it is not like that because some men take advantage by undermining women's authority; There are men who think that due to the fact that we are away from home and in another country that we need them to be there for us in a more sexual way which has a negative influence on us as women.
Women have extra needs that men do not have	Women generally have more personal requirements than men, especially regarding personal hygiene (shower, bath at least once a day); Women[s] issues e.g. menstruation has to be understood.
Women increase the hygiene and neatness of the deployment area	We bring in that special factor: more hygienic; Want to be neat and tidy no matter what or where.
Women behave badly	And the fact that there are women who allow this [meeting men's sexual needs] makes it difficult for women who are not interested in such things.
Gender relations complicate a deployment	It can complicate things; Sometimes it is problematic [male-female relationships]; Men tend to want a 'quick-fix'.

Table 12.2: Sample statements

The impact of women on deployment

In summary, there were three classes of responses: that women influence deployments positively, negatively or in no unique way (compared with men). The majority of women indicated that the presence of women has a positive effect on deployments. A minority of the women indicated that women have no unique influence on deployments that is

different from men. Overall, then, the majority participants in this study were able to highlight positive influences that women have on deployments.

The majority of women gave responses that indicated that the presence of women has a positive effect on deployments. Those who were more specific introduced two main themes, being that women improve relationships in a team and that women improve job performance.

Many women indicated that women facilitate constructive and healthy relationships among team members – enhancing cohesion, morale and communication. Women also provide emotional support to men who experience stress or personal problems. Women help to inhibit bad behaviour by men, thus reducing the likelihood of disciplinary problems.

Many women indicated that the presence of women facilitates better job performance among all team members. Some women suggested that men's egos are challenged by the threat of being outperformed by women, thus they work harder so as not to lose face. Similarly, women reported that they are able to remain focused on the task at hand, without being distracted, which increases the performance of the whole team. They also highlighted women's calm and rational approach to decision-making.

Women's sexuality

Notwithstanding these positive contributions, some women suggest that women also have a negative influence on deployments. The examples related to sexual behaviour. The presence of women may also complicate working relationships, presumably also a reference to sexual tensions. The extra needs that women have, related to personal hygiene and separate facilities, complicate deployments. A third of the women who reported negative influences of women on deployments mentioned that men have negative attitudes to women, particularly women in leadership. Thus it appears that both men and women contribute to the negative view of women's participation in operations.

These responses show that female soldiers in the SANDF regard themselves as full and equal participants in military operations. Since military operations are the core business of the military and since women have historically been barred from participation in military operations, these responses suggest that SANDF women are claiming a central place in the military system. They are not relegated to peripheral, second-line or support roles. Rather, they have claimed a space for themselves on the frontlines alongside their male comrades.

The exemplary South African role

Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that South Africa is one of the troop-contributing countries that deploys significant numbers of women as peacekeepers. Currently 21 per cent of the personnel deployed in the SANDF's peace-support operations are female, and they have been deployed as officers commanding, air traffic

controllers, cargo handlers, guards, medical task team commanders, specialists in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration, as well as military gender advisers as part of its contingent.

Debriefs conducted on women in recent years indicate that their experiences in peace-support missions result in female peacekeepers viewing their deployment as an opportunity to put their military training into practice; particularly because South Africa is a country at peace. They also stated that they tend to be trusted by the local chiefs. Thus far, no female peacekeeper has ever been accused of sexual exploitation and abuse against the local community. As a result they are able to interact with and protect the communities, including the liberty to initiate projects. They also serve as role models to local women and convey a positive message of equality and non-discrimination.

Currently the SANDF consists of 24 per cent females, and they serve in all corps including combat. Their representation in the rank structure ranges from private to major general. Most unfortunately, this representation is thinly spread in the middle and senior command structures. The negative impact of this is that the SANDF does not have a critical mass of women across all levels of command so as to be able to influence decisions taken in ensuring that the defence mandate is pursued through gender lenses.

This challenge is further compounded by the fact that not every senior female officer regards herself as a champion of the gender equality agenda within the organisation. It is also important to underscore the fact that the Department of Defence has deemed it appropriate to increase the recruitment target from 30 to 40 per cent at entry level from 2010, the rationale being that this would enable the SANDF to create a pool that would serve as a feeder system for women's advancement to senior ranks in the future.

Equal training opportunities

Women and men are subjected to the same military training in the SANDF. The revision of the 1996 White Paper on Defence states that²¹ the SADF shall be a balanced, modern, affordable and technologically advanced military force, capable of executing its task effectively and efficiently. Significantly, this vision has been fulfilled with the acquisition of the new defence packages in the Air Force and the Navy. The Army's obsolete equipment is next in line, as the former Minister of Defence, the Honourable Lindiwe Sisulu, selected the enhancement of the landward capabilities to undertake all required missions as one of her priority areas.

The current state of the obsolete landward equipment poses a safety risk and hampering factor not only to the women but to all persons who are small in stature. The detractors of the transformation agenda are quick to label the challenges experienced by some of the women as clear illustrations that women are ineligible to serve in defence. At the moment there is no scientific evidence that women's performance will be undermined simply because of their sex. Not too long ago this point was proven when

Major Catherine Labuschagne made history by being the first woman in the world to fly a Grippen solo.

As a matter of fact, women in defence were impressed to note during the 2010 Aerospace Acrobatic Dynamics exhibition that improvement on the R1 rifle has resulted in an adjustable butt to accommodate members with short or long arms, as this has made the weapon more user-friendly. The second improvement noted was on the Mercedes Benz supplier trucks, which are equivalent to the SANDF's Sammil 50/100. The truck interior is now adjustable to accommodate shorter and smaller people. This enhancement has addressed some of the problems experienced in driving A- and B-type vehicles.

Effective strategies for gender mainstreaming

Several strategies have been pursued in the promotion of gender equity. Initially empowering women was touted as the best strategy. However, observations over the years have shown that this alone does not enable women to take their rightful place in society. The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations' policy statements on gender mainstreaming declare that

this is a process of assessing the implication for women and men of any planned actions, including legislation, policies and programmes in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's concerns and experiences as well as men's, an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.

Gender mainstreaming must thus be regarded as a means to an end, advocating a paradigm shift in the execution of the defence mandate.

It is thus noteworthy to emphasise that in the South African context, gender mainstreaming and the quota system are regarded as key elements in the advancement of the gender equality agenda. Through the quota system it was possible to determine the baseline and thereafter monitor progress achieved in the recruitment and representation of women at all levels of command. It has been observed that this does not necessarily lead to entitlement attitudes, because most women realise that, much as they are subjected to the same training opportunities, this does not translate to equal recognition. Women are expected to go the extra mile in order to prove their worthiness to serve in this male-dominated environment. At this juncture 24 per cent of SANDF soldiers are females. However, much as this signifies progress, it is still below the target set by national and international protocols.

It has also been noted that the processes by which women are to be accepted into a domain pre-empted by men cannot be hurried by outsiders. Consensus building on the gains of promoting gender equality is just as important. The reason is that it ensures that both women and men deepen their understanding of how the achievement of gender

equity is not a zero sum game, implying loss for men and victory for women, but a question of giving members of the SANDF equal opportunities, rights and resources to enable them to realise their full potential.

Consensus was to a large extent achieved through the organisation of the yearly gender conferences, which were attended by all levels of command. These gatherings ensured consensus-building on issues such as the establishment of a department whose mandate is to provide strategic direction on equal opportunity issues. Deliberation at the Department of Defence gender conferences have also led to the recognition of the need for all military development courses to be gendered-equitable. Furthermore, a gender budget was allocated and a monitoring and evaluation capability was developed. This has resulted in the deployment of military gender advisors as part of South Africa's contingent in peacekeeping missions.

Another effective strategy used was the establishment of the Gender Mainstreaming Council by the former Chief of the SANDF, General Godfrey Ngwenya. This council consisted of representatives of all the divisions in the SANDF. Its brief was to explore all pertinent issues impinging on women's ability to pursue successful military careers. Recommendations emanating from this forum were subsequently tabled at the highest decision-making structure, viz. the Plenary Defence Staff Council.

In the South African experience it has become apparent that the pre-negotiation phase is critical in laying the foundation for women's participation in post-conflict reconstruction and development of the country. This is because negotiations provide opportunities to influence the future and to ensure that women are not marginalised. In the military milieu, constitutional imperatives supported by the government's policy framework on gender targets, including a gender-friendly defence policy and strategy, have served as a clear mandate. Political will has been further illustrated by statements made by leaders at various command levels.

At the regional level, the Interstate Defence and Security Committee's personnel work group, which meets annually, has developed a South African Development Community (SADC) Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan that reflects the objectives of greater women's participation. This work group has also reviewed its brigades' standard operational procedure and integrated gender perspectives in it. The cherry on top was the stipulation for all member states to report on the status of gender equality in their respective defence forces in the annual meetings. A specific SADC gender mainstreaming format for reporting on gender issues was also developed and accepted by all member states.

Conclusion

Women's involvement in peace-building processes is indeed an essential element for sustainable post-conflict reconstruction and development. South African women consider themselves blessed because they live in a country whose constitution and national policy framework recognise their right to break barriers and to serve in all

spheres. While much remains to be done to break the glass ceiling, it is important to note that if our forebearers had not been bold enough to pursue the struggle for gender equality, the progress achieved thus far would not have been possible.

Going forward, the championing and the advancement of gender equality must be regarded as every woman's responsibility. We must not delude ourselves by thinking that we are placed in strategic positions today solely on merit – we must accept the fact that we are indeed the product of the democratic process. Justice Thurgood Marshall once said, 'None of us are solely [where we are] by pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps. We got here because somebody ... bent down and helped us.' The fact of the matter is that a better world could only come our way when each one of us chooses to become the change agents of the transformation that we would like to see in our organisation and country.

Interestingly, the findings of the research conducted in the SANDF further indicate that men do not have a monopoly on patriotism, physical ability, desire for adventure or willingness to risk their lives. Until both genders share in the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in respect of the provision of peace and security, women will continue to be considered less than fully fledged citizens.

Thus far, it may seem that women's own space in the SANDF has proceeded smoothly with the full support of the military system and male colleagues. However, women's claims have also been challenged as a result of patriarchal attitudes harboured by some individual men in the SANDF; men who will tell women that they should not complain about the lack of ablution facilities in deployment areas, disregard women's military authority and sexually harass them. The involvement of women in peace and security requires that they possess assertiveness and decision-making skills in order to be able to protect themselves from harm, exploitation, discrimination and abuse.

Women's participation in all spheres of society must thus be recognised as being in line with good democratic practices, as it conveys a message of equality and non-discrimination. There is not such a great superfluity of men fit for high duties that society can afford to reject the services of any competent person. It is significant to note that women endured the same suffering and sacrifice as men and paid a huge price too, so that the people of South Africa could enjoy peace, joy, unity and togetherness. The 2010 Fifa Soccer World Cup tournament demonstrated the desired effects when all South Africans worked together to achieve whatever goal they decided to set for themselves.

Policy considerations

- 1 Workshops/*imbizos* to be conducted prior to policy formulation processes in order to solicit support and consensus-building;
- 2 Promulgation of policies to be linked to action plans, cost performance indicators and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms;

- 3 Mobilisation of society and education of policy beneficiaries for the entrenchment of a common value system;
- 4 Advocating gender equality as a human rights issue; and
- 5 Putting women's participation in all spheres as a good democratic principle.

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13

Chapter

Elections by contract: a covenant of peace in African communities

Ajume Wingo

Introduction

Political power is simultaneously the most potent source of peace and of conflict. To hold political power is to have in one's possession the ability to make one's world one's way within an organisation or organisations we refer to as states— themselves the outcome of political power. To be born free of political power is to be born nowhere. Those not under the grip of illusions of what political power is— just about know deep in their minds what it is to be alive in such a state —are spared of those in control of the instruments of power. The default is to exist as a walking cadaver, if at all. In the world of states, life and death, freedom, justice and opportunities are not manna; they are the products of political power.

At the ultimate and intimate level, no human is immune from the envy of what he or she could do with the instrument of power. Within the realm of political power both the dove and the hawk are equal in their quest for a world they want to see. To be in a position to decide for oneself the way one's life should go, with others doing exactly the same in a well-ordered manner within a polity, is precisely what freedom and sovereignty are all about, for freedom outside the purview of others is nothing but tyranny or utopia. Humility and making space for others is the ultimate arbiter of life lived within the community of others. A good civic education is supposed to yield exactly that, a fulfilling political life because of its legitimacy. Unfortunately, the history of mankind has never been that of humility to others in their relationship to political power. It has been, it is still and will continue to be that of individuals struggling to create the world they want to see for themselves even at the expense of others' lives, not to mention our ecology. The lure for one person (or a small group) to take personal control of political power is that it works, especially in contemporary African states. Those who are not afraid of killing, of treating others as canvas for their aesthetic realisation, of cheating, of rape, of going to war, of lying and of taking control over the instruments of the state for this purpose, are the ones who end up deciding whether you live or die. And if you live, the opportunities available to you, your children, family and members of your ethnic group in the inescapable conditions of life in modern African states. Fortunately, many Africans (as many in the rest of the world) are more sensitive to the conditions of political power in contemporary times than ever before.

The recent introduction of electoral democracy into African politics could be read as an attempt to forcefully push out of states the ability of one person or a group of individuals to obtain monopoly over the power of life and death. While a wonderful source of restraining and sharing political power in the service of peace, sovereignty and legitimacy, electoral democracy could also be a powerful source of virulent conflict. Case in point: the fighting in Kenya over the disputed 2008 presidential elections between incumbent President Mwai Kibaki and challenger Raila Odinga killed more than 1 500 people, drove 70 000 from their homes and thousands to neighbouring countries, and resulted in the assassination of three members of parliament. This case is an island of the archipelago over a hidden body of pent-up electoral conflicts wherever elections are held in African states. Worst, elections are a new mode in the neighbourhood for acquiring and delegitimising political power and not a source of peace. It is not difficult to see how this could be. In well-ordered modern democratic states tyranny is not kept at bay merely by having democratic elections.

What often kept tyranny at bay is what is difficult to create or merely to hand out, as donor countries do electoral democracy to African states. In well-regarded Western democracies, democracy only came later. What was first established was constitutionality, the rule of law and separation of power, in other words individual sovereignty as a sure way of keeping tyrants at bay. This is especially true of states such as the United States, Britain, France and Germany, which share the history of the Magna Carta of 1215. The converse is true of African states. Since for African states democracy came first, they will have to work backward, using electoral democracy as an instrument to bring about the rule of law, the separation of power and constitutionality. In other words, electoral democracy will have to become accustomed to loosening the tight fists of a tyrant's grip on the throats of their citizens and to enfranchise and put individual citizens into the cockpits of their lives – a daunting task. That means that the African states will need to do two things in the service of perpetual peace: empower individual citizens and keep tyranny at bay. Ultimately, electoral democracy should yield legitimacy and a potent sense of ownership of political power by individual citizens to win or lose (especially lose despite the outcome of each election).

That the African electoral system is highly perverted is not the question; the question is where the problem lies. The mistaken tendency is always to point the finger at Africans, illustrated by the number of election monitors that descend upon any African state to ensure free and fair elections. The sotto voce implication here is that of treating this Western artifact, an electoral system, as sacrosanct and treating Africans as damaged, the worst, and immature. This tendency is not likely to create any form of legitimacy and perpetual peace at all.

This chapter is one attempt at achieving perpetual peace in African states through electoral democracy as an instrument. The path taken by this chapter is that of looking for the problems with the democratic electoral systems where they currently are; and they are in the democratic electoral systems themselves, not in African people. Our de

facto democratic electoral system creates too many negative opportunities for pervasion and few positive opportunities for legitimacy. The solution is that of reorienting the electoral system so it can procure perpetual peace and legitimacy and act as a source of individual flourishing. The good news is that electoral democracy is the rule all over the continent and no longer an exception. The problem is of perversion of the system.

African states are committed, at least as a matter of their formal institutions, to democracy: indeed, there seems to be no African country today that does not, at least, claim to be democratic and no state that does not purport to showcase that claim through elections. Nonetheless, few African states have earned a reputation as a thriving and legitimate democratic regime. The failure of democracy in Africa is manifest in many long-serving leaders who, once in office, consolidate power and manage to stay in office through sham elections in corrupt electoral systems.

This electoral corruption touches virtually everything and everyone on the continent. So prevalent is electoral corruption that many Africans have lost touch with what democratic elections are ultimately supposed to be: the means of the public to govern itself. A well-functioning democratic electoral system creates a sense of legitimacy that reconciles even those who did not vote for the elected leaders to their government, but many African electoral systems deliver quite the opposite lesson, delegitimising both the government and much-needed collective action. Left unchecked, electoral corruption threatens what contemporary Africans most desperately need – a sense of what it is to be a citizen with the conviction that government is to serve the people and the resolve to act on this conviction.

This chapter presents a new approach to African electoral processes that may provide a useful complement to the usual array of election monitors and international forces deployed to fight corruption. Section I starts with a broad analysis of electoral corruption and identifies a novel species of structural electoral corruption – what I call electoral corruption in *nomos*. Section II links the problem of electoral corruption in *nomos* with another endemic problem for Africans, a perspective I call *leadercentrism*, which relies on the qualities of political leaders rather than on impersonal institutions to limit the risk of government abuse. As I argued here, dealing with electoral corruption in *nomos* requires breaking the grip of leadercentrism and cultivating citizens' active role in their own governance. In Section III, I identify some of the local practices found in many indigenous African communities that can be used as a foundation on which to base what I refer to as the *living-legitimacy* of new democratic electoral structures and institutions in Africa. By way of conclusion, in section IV, general principles for a model of African electoral reform based on those local practices are sketched.

Varieties of electoral corruption

Dearly beloved, never forget, when you hear anyone vaunt the progress of enlightenment, that the devil's finest trick is to persuade you that he does not exist!

– Charles Baudelaire, in *The Generous Gambler*

Free and fair elections are at the heart of any legitimate democracy. Accordingly, organisations often measure democratisation on whether and how elections are held. By that measure there has been significant progress toward democratisation in Africa: while just three African countries held parliamentary elections in 1973, almost all of them held parliamentary elections in 2009.

However, even democracies that succeed on that metric often fail on others; witness, for instance, the prevalence of one-party rule even in some democracies such as Botswana and South Africa. While persistent one-party rule may sometimes reflect the popularity of the ruling party, it more likely indicates a blind spot in our understanding of how electoral corruption can undermine democratic rule. That is, such failures suggest that African leaders have often successfully grafted Western electoral mechanisms onto a political culture that allows them to manipulate those mechanisms in indirect, but often decisive ways. The finest trick of many African politicians, then – like that of Baudelaire's devil – may have been to persuade donor states that the real source of corruption which is keeping them in office does not exist.

My analysis is based on a notion of *structural electoral corruption*, or electoral corruption *in nomos*. Because it is woven into the fabric of political culture, corruption *in nomos* does not bear the ordinary badges of more conventional conceptions of corruption, which I term electoral corruption *in contract* and electoral corruption in contact.

Electoral corruption exists in contract whenever formal measures by which the ruling party or group enacts regulations or statutes are inconsistent with a fair electoral system. According to Freedom House, for instance, an electoral democracy must have:

- a) competitive multi-party political system;
- b) universal adult suffrage for all citizens (with exceptions for restrictions that states may legitimately place on citizens as sanctions for criminal offences);
- c) regularly contested elections conducted in conditions of ballot secrecy, reasonable ballot security, and the absence of massive voter fraud that yields results unrepresentative of the public will; and
- d) significant public access of the major political parties to the electorate through the media and through generally open political campaigning.

Formal electoral systems in African countries have little problem satisfying these conditions, and so are free from what I call “electoral corruption in contract”.

The more obvious place to look for electoral corruption in African countries is in the manipulation of actual voting processes such as ballot stuffing, multiple voting, bribery (gift-giving or “cola-nut” as it is known in Cameroon and Nigeria) in exchange for votes, and voter intimidation. All these are instances of corruption *in contact*, i.e., measures to circumvent the formal electoral system. This form of corruption is the subject of scrutiny from international election monitors such as the National Democratic Institute, the Carter Center, the European Union, and now the African Union.

Corruption in contract and in contact are two important kinds of corruption, but focusing exclusively on them is not sufficient to identify or control the pernicious effect of electoral corruption. It is not enough to ensure that the appropriate formal procedures are correctly and fairly implemented. International monitoring groups do important work in making sure that certain formal protections are actually implemented, but their close focus may lead them to overlook more systematic injustices and thus end up blessing the outcome of a deeply biased system.

There is good reason to think such systematic biases exist in African political culture. Recent African history reveals a persistent pattern in which (with notable exceptions), political leaders in Africa often stay in office through elections, but rarely leave in that way. When they do leave through what Africans call a “coup from heaven” or death in office, the incumbent is often succeeded by a hand-picked successor. (See, for example, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Togo and Gabon. If not for the Arab Spring, one could add Tunisia, Egypt and Libya to this list as well.) The ability of African “presidents for life” to elude both formal election procedures and the scrutiny of outside monitors thus suggests that there is a further factor relevant to understanding electoral corruption.

This further kind of corruption consists of a constellation of activities that constitute corruption *in nomos*. Like other forms of electoral corruption, this consists of deliberate efforts to pervert the translation of the public will into policy. This specific kind of corruption is particularly pernicious, because it adheres to the letter of the law while perverting its spirit. Examples of such corruption include intentional efforts to undermine political participation through undermining faith in public institutions, a process that serves as a *de facto* form of voter suppression. Populations that are ignored or intentionally underserved by the government come to believe that there is nothing the government can do for them, and so may believe that there is no point to political participation.

Another example of structural corruption comes from the intentionally unequal distribution of economic and educational opportunities. Electoral laws in many African states formally give every citizen a right to political participation, but this right will not be exercised unless one has the physical capacity to participate, the knowledge of how to participate, and the understanding of why it is important to participate. That most of

rural Africans and disenfranchised urban Africans lack these capacities can be largely attributed to governments recognising that it is simply not in their interest to foster and sustain such political involvement. The regions of the favoured ethnicities often receive better schools, hospitals, employment, roads, electricity, clean water supply (and today) internet service. The military, police and judges are generally recruited from these regions. Such decisions ultimately affect voting outcomes, yet are invisible to election monitors.

Another example of corruption *in nomos* involves the multiplication of opposition parties. On the face of it, the growth in opposition parties appears to be progress in a democratic system. Yet this may actually constitute electoral manipulation, in that it divides any opposition that might otherwise threaten the ruling party's dominance. No laws are violated and no voters are intimidated or driven from the polls – and the ruling party remains just as insulated from competition as ever.

For example, from the 1960s through the early 1980s, Cameroon was ruled by President Ahidjo and his single party, the Cameroon National Union. In 1983, Ahidjo was succeeded by the present head of state of Cameroon, Paul Biya. Unlike Ahidjo, Biya consolidated his power not by repressing opposition parties, but by encouraging them, offering each new party about \$10 000 in starter funds. By the 1990s, Cameroon had more than 150 parties, and Biya's party, the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM), has been in power legally for more than a quarter of a century now, conducting regular presidential, municipal and parliamentary elections. His term of office has expired twice, but thanks to CPDM's dominance of the parliament, he has had the constitution amended – all quite legally – to allow him to run again.

The government of Biya is as dictatorial and unresponsive to the Cameroonian population as Ahidjo's was, yet is largely invulnerable to charges that it has held onto power through conventional election fraud. Biya regularly invites in election monitors from all over the world who consistently certify his elections as legitimate. Indeed, Biya is quite sensitive to allegations of electoral fraud. When, for instance, he was accused of corruption in the planning for presidential, parliamentary, and municipal elections in 2011, he quickly replaced the corrupt national body that had been charged with monitoring the 2001 and 2004 elections, "*Observatoire National des Elections*," with a new, independent commission, "*Elections Cameroon*," to restore confidence that future elections would be carried out freely and fairly.

On the surface, there is little evidence of electoral corruption in Biya's Cameroon, and when voting rights or political activities are restricted, such restrictions are pursuant to the lawful powers of the state. No one is directly deprived of his or her political rights. Yet, there is still no effective opposition party in Cameroon. By dividing the opposition, Biya can champion political diversity while at the same time controlling the outcome of elections just as effectively as if he intimidated voters through direct violence.¹

The concept of corruption *in nomos* raises great practical challenges. Most seriously, it will be difficult for reformers to propose practical ways of correcting this

kind of structural corruption. Entire systems are not generally changed all at once – or at least, they are usually not changed *peacefully* all at once. The practical challenge in addressing structural electoral corruption, then, is to understand how to make peaceful, non-violent incremental changes needed to mitigate the effects of structural corruption.

Corruption, leadercentrism and the undermining of democratic values

The problem of leadercentrism

The most obvious harm caused by electoral corruption is that it distorts the public's 'voice' as expressed at the ballot box. This is bad enough, but what is worse is that corruption also undermines democratic values generally by tarnishing citizens' self-image as individuals capable of governing themselves. In Africa, this has fostered what I refer to as *leadercentrism*, or the view that political systems should be represented and analysed in terms of individual social and political leaders, and the resulting tendency to think of problems and solutions to political problems in terms of finding the right individuals to fill positions of power. Thus, ask ordinary Africans what is wrong with their governments and you will hear from nearly every corner of the continent the same reply: *bad leaders!* Ask those same Africans what they see as the solution and you get the same response: *good leaders!*²

Leadercentrism and electoral corruption operate in mutually supporting ways. On the one hand, the utterly predictable failure of the electoral system to respond to the will of the public understandably undermines citizens' faith in the electoral system. The most obvious solution to that problem is to install a powerful – and ideally incorruptible – leader to intervene from outside that system to fix things. But once in power, a leader's opportunities for enriching himself through corruption are greatly expanded, which prompts voters to look for yet another "incorruptible" leader.

Africa without leaders - toward a non-leadercentric future

A critical step in uprooting corruption *in nomos* is to up-end support for leadercentrism throughout Africa. How do we do this? We start with the conviction that democracy is not "being cheered on by the universe," but requires a certain type of environment to thrive. Democracy is a deliberative human political institution intended to respect the will and inviolability of individual citizens. It is not merely a procedural device centring on elections, but relates to a cluster of substantive principles and requirements concerning both the rights and the responsibilities of citizens, such as:

1. *Naturalism*: Democracy is a social institution in which humans select other humans to wield political power, and is inconsistent with the selection of leaders by divine right, class, or lineage.

2. *Participation*: While the nature and degree of participation required in a democracy are open questions, some degree of citizens' participation is indispensable for a democracy.
3. *Deliberation*: Debate and criticism are essential to the workings of democracy, insofar as it depends on individuals' non-coerced judgments and preferences.
4. *Individualism*: The basic unit in democracy is the individual, insofar as measures of the preferences of the public are a function of the preferences of individuals, with each given equal weight.

While specific variants of democracy – liberal democracy, participatory democracy, deliberative democracy, etc. – can be crafted by supplementing or revising these factors, the cluster of factors above together provides a substantive 'core' of a democratic system.

It is this substantive core that accounts for the widely shared intuition by Africans that their electoral systems are fundamentally illegitimate, notwithstanding the fact that they comply with the minimal procedural requirements of "free and fair elections." The deliberative and participatory elements in particular require a degree of understanding on the part of voters about what is at issue in the election that too often is missing.

For instance, following the October 2011 presidential elections, a young Cameroonian voter, Jude, confessed to me that while the candidate who received his vote won, "there is much in the election that I did not understand and could never hope to but I could sense in my gut that there was something evil about the election and in fact elections that I do not think protesting can ever fix. I mean that I am not happy about elections; I don't really know why; that's all."

As Jude recognised, elections in African states are almost inevitably tinged with underlying corruption and manipulation. Elections have, with few exceptions, failed to deliver for Africans what a democratic system should – a means of giving citizens a reason to feel that, win or lose (and especially lose), the government is legitimate and theirs. Such failure leads voters understandably to lose interest in the electoral process and turn either to apathy or violence. The former merely cedes power to the existing regime; the latter provokes even greater use of violence by the state. Of note here is the 2007/08 election violence in Kenya that took the lives of many, including members of parliament, and created a refugee crisis. In no event does it pay to try to challenge the electoral system by petitioning the government, for taking one's case to the electoral committee or some similar authority is like a cockroach taking her case to the court of fowls: nothing she says will stop the fowls from devouring her.

The frustration evident in Jude's complaint betrays the low expectations that he and other many Africans have of democracy – expectations born of a conception of democracy as purely procedural. A more substantive conception of democracy, such as that described, helps explain this dissatisfaction with the superficial electoral processes of the sort we have just seen in Egypt or, more generally, the purely procedural requirements normally used to judge the adequacy of elections. The election may have

satisfied those formal requirements, but did not satisfy substantive democratic values, nor did it deliver what an election is supposed to deliver, i.e. ownership of the system by citizens.

So is Africa doomed?

Africans have the misfortune that the view of democracy with which they are most familiar was handed down to them by Western powers out to advance their own self-interest, rather than those of Africans, and it seems that in Africa, advancing one person's interest seems inevitably to come at the cost of the interests of others.

Just as Europeans of the Enlightenment and American political thinkers of the Revolutionary period looked to ancient Greece and Rome for models of their own governments, political theorists and practitioners in post-colonial Africa have often looked to the institutions left behind by their former colonial masters in framing their own approach to politics. But the colonisers that put those institutions in place were less interested in helping Africans develop strong and stable democracies than in maintaining compliant and loyal African leaders, capable of serving the colonial powers' own interests best through indirect rule. Not surprisingly, the institutions that best served those interests vested power in the local leaders most directly under the control of the colonial powers. In short, they embodied leadercentrism.

The models adopted from the colonial powers thus planted the seed of leadercentrism for African politics. Undoing the resulting damage will require Africans to look more critically at the institutions left by former colonial powers and incorporate some of their own traditions to establish governments that are responsive to the demands of ordinary African citizens. The aim of the next section is to provide a new blueprint for African democracy that draws on indigenous practices intended to promote an alternative to the leadercentric traditions of post-colonial African politics.

Democratic legitimacy and living-legitimacy

Growing up in Cameroon, I was profoundly shaped by the communal nature of my environment. After dinner we would sit by the fire to listen to stories from our parents, visiting friends and neighbours, and strangers passing through on their travels. Storytellers would regale us with well-known tales with familiar plots, characters and themes, and make old stories new by weaving in new elements and twists. These were not passive performances: we would interrupt the storyteller with questions or comments, which the storyteller would then weave into his narrative. Sometimes the narrator would enlist the audience as chorus or to perform a dance as part of the performance. These stories were more than a mere pastime or form of entertainment: they were a pedagogic mechanism for instilling historical lessons, civil education, moral principles and models of sound reasoning, all packaged in a familiar and engaging form.

This pedagogical model contrasts sharply with compulsory primary schooling that the Cameroonian government instituted in the 1970s. Classes in these schools

were in Europhones, French and English, the languages of Cameroon's former colonial masters. Our teachers were drill sergeants, imposing strict discipline and tedious rote exercises often enforced by generous applications of the switch and paddle. Our indigenous languages and traditions were forbidden. Virtually everything we were taught was foreign to us, and we came out of this system knowing much about Europe and the United States, but next to nothing about our own community and history.

These anecdotes are mentioned here to help introduce a new concept I refer to as *living-legitimacy*, or the view that local legitimate practices should inform democratic political theory, and that democratic political theory should in turn shape those practices. Institutions informed by local practices tend to respect the people as autonomous agents, and have the capacity to shape their understanding of themselves. For instance, a democratic education that draws on the "legitimate practices" of traditional storytelling and communal learning described above would pass the living-legitimacy test. The alien educational structures imposed by the Cameroonian government in the 1970s, however, lacked such living-legitimacy, being essentially a foreign object imposed from above on students.

Living-legitimacy embodies the general view that the deep-seated foundations of a workable African democracy should grow out of actual African practices, not be imposed from above or outside of Africa. This does not, of course, imply that indigenous practices are sufficient: no one could plausibly maintain that all those practices – many of which embody illiberal restrictions on the basis of sex, class, or ethnicity – support or are even consistent with basic democratic principles. What it means is that when attempting to promote democratic principles, we should look first among those local practices and traditions that are consistent with or conducive to democracy. Below, various traditions are sketched, practices and values commonly found throughout indigenous African societies (in many forms) that can be used for the purpose of instilling a spirit of living-legitimacy into democratic theory and action.

Regard for sovereign power

Leadercentrism is the antithesis of what I refer to as 'sovereign power,' or the use of political power by the sovereign itself, i.e., the public. Sovereign power implies an active citizenry that refuses simply to cede its power to those individuals that hold office and wield the power of the state for the benefit of the sovereign.

The African tradition of sovereign power is evident in the history of acephalous (or "headless") states, such as the Igbo of Nigeria, the Kru of Liberia, the Tellensi of Ghana, the Konkomba of Togoland, the Fulani of Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon, the Somali, the Jie of Uganda, and the Mbere of Kenya. Such states are distinctive in that they had no institutions distinct from the sovereign in which the authority of the sovereign was vested who might then abuse that authority.

Even societies that were not fully acephalous constrained their leaders so as to protect sovereign power. In the North-west Region of Cameroon, for instance,

institutions were crafted to make the Fon (or king) essentially a figurehead with little power but many burdens. The ritual of inaugurating or “enstooling” the Fon was referred to as “compelling” or “obliging,” and the mothers of the men so compelled have been known to cry out that their sons have been stripped of their *nyang* (or ‘freedom’), since assuming that office practically required him to eschew any private, self-interested conduct. In the past, the punishment for a Fon’s transgression of common morality or the laws of the land was unbelievably severe: he was compelled to commit suicide.

The traditions of acephalous states and quasi-acephalous states like that of the Nso represent one answer to the basic political question as to how to constraint state power. For such states, the answer is simply not to entrust the sovereign’s power to *any* particular individuals, which rules out the possibility that the party to whom that power is allocated will abuse it. In many ways, then, this is similar to the traditions of constitutional limits on the power of the state in the United States. Both approaches eschew leadercentrism’s reliance on leaders’ ability to limit themselves, and embody the same highly skeptical and fundamentally anti-leadercentric approach.

Inherent value of the human individual

One value associated with democracy is the preservation of individual freedom and autonomy of the citizens living under that system. A democratic system helps to support that value by serving as a mechanism for individuals to rule themselves, if only indirectly through their representatives. The problems arising from leadercentrism, however, expose the limits of relying just on the selection of leaders to support that value. Unfortunately, it sometimes appears that leadercentrism’s dominance in recent African history has been such that it is difficult for ordinary African citizens to imagine an alternative to such a tradition, and so find it difficult to imagine that a robust system of rule of law could be capable of constraining the actions of their political leaders.

To counter the effect of that recent history, it is worth recalling an indigenous example of the inviolability of the human individual tradition embodied in one of the oldest and philosophically underappreciated documents on human rights: the “Oath of the Manden”. Formulated by the founders of the Malian empire during the reign of Sunjata Keita and preserved by the West African Secret Society of Hunters, this document, sometimes referred to as the “Oath of the Hunters”, was proclaimed circa 1222 (roughly contemporaneously with the Magna Carta), and demonstrates that Africans have resources within their history to orient their politics away from leadercentrism into enduring institutions designed to promote justice, freedom, equality, democracy and protect the ultimate minority, the individual.

The substance of the Oath provides a natural and genuinely African blueprint for structuring responsive, liberal democratic states. Consider, for instance, three of its articles:

The Hunters declare: Every (human) life is a life. It is true that a life comes to existence before another life, but no life is more “ancient”, more respectable than another life, just as no life is superior to another life.

The sixth article states:

The Hunters declare: the root of slavery is extinct on this day, from one wall to the other, from one border of the Manden to the other; razzia is banned in the Manden from now on, the torments created by those horrors are over, starting this day in the Manden. What a trial torments are! Especially when the oppressed has no recourse. For the slave is given no consideration, nowhere in the world.

The seventh article states:

People from ancient times tell us: "man as an individual made of bones and flesh, marrow and nerves, of skin covered with hackles and hair, is nourished by food and drinks; but his soul, his spirit lives out of three things: to see whom he wants to see, to say what he wants to say, and to do what he wants to do; should one of these things be missing for the human soul, it would certainly suffer from it and wilt".

Consequently, the Hunters declare:

From now on everyone shall enjoy self-determination,
Everyone shall be free in their actions,
Everyone shall dispose of the fruits of their labor.
This is the Oath of the Manden for the rest of the world to hear.

The Oath captures in a profound and beautiful way the essence of liberal constitutionalism. It honours the ultimate minority – the individual person – and asserts the inviolability of the rights of such an individual to both material goods required for individuals' physical health and well-being, and spiritual or aesthetic goods on which the welfare of the human soul depends, including freedom of self-determination, speech and conscience. The Oath thus serves as an ancient African statement of principles regarding the proper limits of, and the obligations of, any legitimate government vis-à-vis its ultimate minority, the individual person.

This tradition of the sacredness of the human individual articulated nearly 800 years ago in Africa lives on in institutions such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) convened in South Africa following the fall of the apartheid regime, and the *gacaca* courts of Rwanda that have played such a major role in supporting reconciliation following the genocide of 1994. The South African TRC and Rwandan *gacaca* courts resounded throughout the world, both because of the magnitude of the events with which they were associated and because of the way they demonstrated how native resources could be appropriated to address conflict in modern multi-cultural states such as South Africa and Rwanda.

Such institutions are but the best known of traditional African methods for the peaceful resolution of conflict. What they have in common is a thoroughly humanistic orientation typical of African theories of morality in general. Such theories generally

regard the human person as the centre of values, and call upon moral agents to empathise with other humans and to help those in need. Among the Akan of Ghana and the Nso of Cameroon, for instance, there is a sacred and divine element in every human the Akan refers to as the “okra.” By virtue of the possession of that divine element, every human, irrespective of race, gender, or other characteristic, is entitled to dignity, respect, and the right to be free of harm caused by others. The tradition embodied in the South African “ubuntu”, a Xhosa/Zulu concept of ‘humanity towards others’, is another indigenous African tradition founded on the inviolability of the human individual in the spirit of living together.

These traditions are continuous with African traditions of spirituality. In contrast to Abrahamic religious institutions, which are defined by particular figures and historical events, African spiritual traditions present themselves as a way of living, rather than as a story imposed on history. Spirituality is thus often naturally woven into the daily lives of many Africans in their belief systems and activities – dancing, singing, laughing, helping others, taking care of children, elders, burials and so on. Significantly, this spirituality lacks any centralising institutional system and leaders. As such, it dovetails with self-rule, allowing individuals the power to determine how they manage their own spiritualities – an almost essentially anti-leadercentric ethos. (See Amon and Aton, examples from ancient Egypt.)

Voluntary social associations

Those in search of institutions capable of imparting the values and habits needed to sustain democratic states that embody living-legitimacy need look no further than the fellowship associations or voluntary associations that anchor many African communities. These fellowship associations come in various forms and shapes, with rotating credit associations, save and thrift clubs and self-help organisations being just a few of the more common types of fellowship associations. In the more isolated regions in particular, fellowship organisations continue to provide crucial functions needed for commerce, such as credit and banking services. This category of associations is the mainstay of African free enterprise, serving as convenient and efficient sources of investment capital, credit and other financial services.

Such associations provide models for coordinating collective actions and forging networks of relationships. Members of the association, for instance, are bound together by contractual agreement they freely create for themselves. The terms of the associations are clearly spelled out in writing or in memory, and provide means of enforcing those agreements against those who, after willingly entering the agreements, breach their obligations. Indeed, the concepts of contracts and binding reciprocal promises are so central to the workings of fellowship associations that the people of Nso in Cameroon refer to such associations as “a ngwah,” literally ‘contracts’.

Fellowship associations create venues for civic participation that reveal Africans as individuals full of resolve, determination, and staying power. There they exercise

genuine control over their circumstances, with the capacity to intervene in significant ways to better both their own lives and those of the persons closest to their hearts. In that respect, their experience within these associations is quite different from their experiences with respect to government agencies and officials, which merely underscore their powerlessness.³

It is at the local level in associations like the fellowship ones that individuals learn by practising the art and habits of self-rule. Experiences with these associations are thus a useful antidote to leadercentrism, which stunts the democratic spirit by imposing top-down controls and perverts democratic mechanisms into a means of ceding citizens' authority and capacity for self-rule to others.

Traditions of conflict resolution on the African continent

Many African political traditions are deeply rooted in consensus and the avoidance of conflict. In the context of most of African history, such a strategy was highly rational, given the advantages this attitude offered in an environment where survival was for so long a precarious thing. The “flight rather than fight” strategy is reflected in other ways as well, particularly in the structure and functioning of many indigenous political practices. Many Africans take justified pride in their traditions of consensus and deliberation. Faced with a dispute or conflict, African communities resort in the most civilised way of dealing with conflict that we can image: they talk. They talk and they talk for as long as it takes to achieve agreement – not just agreement to be bound by a decision, but genuine consensus.

Traditions such as these could provide a powerful basis for democratic or responsive government, acknowledging as it does the need for the consent of the governed. Deliberation is a sine qua non of any responsive democratic system. While this commitment to consensus raises its own problems, it has the undeniable virtue of grounding a tradition of deliberation and peaceful resolution in the desire of the parties concerned to reach agreement. The implied reliance on one's own reason further undermines leadercentrism, which naturally demands deference to ‘experts’ and militates in favour of monopolising knowledge.

Another native resource for conflict resolution is the practice of reconciliation, which is often used to temper the implications of strict adherence to justice. For instance, the South African TRC did not merely bring the perpetrators of apartheid to justice, but more significantly facilitated peaceful coexistence between those perpetrators and their victims in a country that badly needed what both sides have to offer. Taking seriously the experiences of individuals on both sides, that programme of atonement, reconciliation, and in some cases, forgiveness steered away from the top-down leadercentric approach.

Conclusion: toward a model of African electoral reform

The examples surveyed above show that leaders and centralised power play a miniscule role in many aspects of African life. These institutions and traditions constitute a basic set of pan-African “best practices” for developing a viable alternative to leadercentrism. As shown above, African democracy should be derived from best living-legitimate practices and there are enough of those practices to build vibrant African democracies. Essential reforms are vital to directly undermine the twin evils of corruption in *nomos* and leadercentrism. Giving citizens more say in the actual content of local decisions and policy-making will help limit the manipulation of elections by fragmenting the opposition, since elections are no longer about electing leaders, but instead are about selecting specific projects and policies. Encouraging citizen deliberation will also prompt individuals to consider the merits of particular policies and take responsibility for what their representatives do, and so discourage the practice of outsourcing their self-rule to leaders. Calling on voters not just to select leaders on the basis of what they promise, but to put their stamp of approval – or disapproval – on what those leaders have actually done further supports citizens’ accountability and ownership of public policy. This also limits the advantage of incumbency enjoyed by many African leaders, since those incumbents would be forced to be accountable for their failures to keep their promises.

Policy recommendations

- Localise elections. Many different African communities have long-standing traditions of local control. Focusing elections on local issues and policies, rather than merely the selection of national leaders, will draw on those traditions and experiences, and foster citizens’ ownership over the particular policies that most directly affect them. Change the subject matter of elections. To make it clear to citizens that their vote controls subsequent government policies and decisions, the choices voters make should not only determine which individuals will be trusted with sovereign power, but actually how sovereign power will be used. That is, instead of asking voters to select leaders who will exercise their own judgment as to how to apply sovereign power, voters should be asked questions about how sovereign power is to be applied directly, in the way voters in the United States are sometimes presented with referendums on specific policy questions.⁴
- Change electoral procedures to encourage deliberation among voters. Integrating public debate or discussions in local fellowship associations or local markets into the election process is a way to tap into African traditions of consensus-building about public priorities. Such discussions are not only likely to lead to better decisions, but will, more significantly, help focus voters’ attention on determining policies, rather than just on which leaders are chosen.
- Encourage or even require voters’ to review or ratify government decisions. Another way to help establish voter control over the public agenda is to seek voters’

express approval not just of candidates and their promises, but also of officeholders and their actual achievements. This would focus citizens' attention on what their representatives have actually done (or failed to do), and draw upon African traditions requiring strict accountability for their leaders.

The result for citizens is a system of government that is theirs, one that feels legitimate to them and so has authority over them. In that sense, it is hard to imagine a sharper contrast to the leadercentric tradition that has so poorly served most of Africa's citizens. If only for that reason, then, there is a compelling reason to explore and develop this kind of new model of elections for Africa.

Notes

- 1 This is a recurring pattern in Africa. For instance, when criticized for his "No Party Democracy" – a version of one-party democracy – President Museveni of Uganda replaced it with a crowd of opposition parties, none of which was capable of challenging him or his own party.
- 2 This effect is not limited to Africans. During the Arab Spring, for instance, Western commentators repeatedly asked where Libya would find its George Washington or whether Egypt would have another Nelson Mandela emerge.
- 3 These associations serve other interests beyond that of participation. For instance, they are a valuable information network for traditional communities. In West Africa people have referred to the heated discussions and civil exchanges within these associations as *palava*, i.e., a form of free and frank speech. Such exchanges almost always involve persons of varied backgrounds – members typically belong to several different associations, such that no two members are likely to belong to all the same associations – and so have a 'cross-pollinating' effect by exposing members to points of view they might otherwise not hear.

These associations also help train individuals to deal with diversity and conflict. Since the yearning to satisfy the private interests of individuals is the focal point of these associations, the challenges in managing conflicting, divergent, convergent, plural interests teach people how to get along with those with whom they do not always see eye to eye. The fact of plural, crisscrossing and protean interests of individuals demands an atmosphere of tolerance. More importantly, that fact of diversity and conflict demands that individuals learn to tolerate losing fights over scarce goods by coming to realise that one may lose on this or that issue but gain in this or that one tomorrow or the day after tomorrow.
- 4 It is perhaps not surprising that voting reforms such as referendums, voter initiatives and recalls in the United States were pioneered during the progressive era for the purpose of circumventing corrupt 'machine politics' and political bosses. Such devices may not be needed when voters can be confident that elected leaders will be sufficiently constrained by other institutions or a strong tradition of the rule of law. When that confidence breaks down – as happened in the years leading up to the progressive era in the United States or in the chaotic post-colonial era across Africa – these elements of direct democracy can be a welcome remedy for political corruption.

Elections and community regeneration: implications for democracy and peacebuilding in the DRC¹

Sylvester Bongani Maphosa

Introduction

This chapter considers the phenomenon of democratisation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and lays bare the character of the nexus of that process with building holistic peaceful communities. The predisposition to underscore no more than a set of electoralist, institutionalist, and proceduralist criteria in fragile and post-conflict countries as the embrace of human security is a fallacy in the quest for peaceful communities. Although some progress has been made in relation to democratisation, many gaps exist to be filled with regard to achieving enduring change and peace in the DRC. Elections alone do not make democracy and sustain a culture of peace and development. Indeed, many countries on the continent have gone through the motions of plebiscites, yet their democratic dividend and prospects for peace and development continue to elude millions, subjecting many to protracted socio-economic deprivation and authoritarian governance. More and more, democratisation is being reduced to electoral democracy, which does not deal with community demands of non-electoral dimensions. How can we connect elections with socio-economic conditions in the DRC? What is the missing link between elections, human security and development? The emerging realisation is that re-building the DRC calls for multi-dimensional, multi-sectoral, multi-levelled and multi-staged process approaches to recovery that emphasise simultaneously complementing dimensions such as reconciliation and psychosocial healing, to sustain long-term peace and cooperation between groups and eradicate the root causes of conflict.

Background

The DRC is the second largest country in Africa, measuring about 2 344 858 square kilometers.² Located in Central Africa, it is bordered on the north by the Central Africa Republic, on the north-east by South Sudan, on the west by Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania, the south-west by Zambia, on the south-east by Angola and the contiguous Cabinda province, and on the north-west by the Republic of the Congo. The general topography of the area is a vast and varied central basin with a low-lying plateau and replete with tropical forests, mountains and highlands in the east. Even though systematic environmental survey has not been undertaken, it is known that large areas of the country contain huge reserves of natural resources with great potential

for economic benefit, such as cassiterite, copper, diamonds, gold, columbite tantalum (coltan), uranium, gold, silver, industrial and gem diamonds, as well as hydropower, timber and agricultural wealth.³ The country has an estimated population of 73 599 190 inhabitants and more than 200 ethnic communities that live together. There are 10 administrative provinces: Bandundu, Bas-Congo, Equateur, Kasai East, Kasai West, Katanga, Kinshasa, Maniema, North Kivu, Orientale and South Kivu.

The economy of the DRC is gradually improving from many years of violent conflict and rampant corruption that incapacitated the government and paralysed the country's socio-economic infrastructure. In particular, the violent conflict that followed state collapse in 1996 has to this day claimed more than 5.4 million lives, dislocated more than 2.3 million people internally and placed more than 400 000 in refugee camps in the region.⁴ The conflict maimed and disabled many more individuals, while the social fabric in many families and whole communities was eroded.⁵ This preceding significant security vacuum was the proximate cause for external intercession, leading to the establishment of the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in 1999.⁶ With a current strength of 18 928 uniformed personnel, 983 international civilian staff, 2 820 local civilian staff, 614 UN volunteers, and a budget of 1.5 billion dollars (\$1 489 390 500) per annum; the mission is the largest UN peace-support operation in the world.⁷

Nature of conflict

Much of what is generalised as the 'conflict in the DRC' results from a pattern of behaviour that brings great benefits to a limited number of people while marginalising the majority of the population from political decision-making and economic opportunity.⁸ After rigorous review of different narratives on the crisis, the author proposes in this essay a basic description that tags along Edward Azar's conception of 'ethnopolitical conflicts' to characterise the façade of the DRC problem.⁹ Fundamentally, the character of the DRC problem is expressed through complex forms of protracted and violent social turmoil, viz.: (i) Conflicts between identity groups of which at least one feels that its basic needs for equality, security and political participation are not respected; (ii) Conflict essentially about access to state-related power, often in the form of asymmetric conflict between government and insurgent group(s); (iii) Social turmoil that cannot be understood without various types of international linkages affecting the course of events; and, (iv) Unrest that is often based on deeply rooted antagonistic histories.¹⁰ It is important to underscore that the crisis in the DRC has no religious nuance, despite the fact that religious establishments champion the cause of the vulnerable.

Analyses beyond the immediate causes bring to light other hidden sources of unrelenting violence in the DRC, including: (i) A leadership and authority vacuum, which can be explained at two levels. Firstly, the previous regimes encouraged organising around urban areas such as Kinshasa, which brought about a deficit of coherent leadership and internal fragmentation in many remote rural areas. Secondly, insecurity

in most parts of the country (especially in the eastern districts) extends a vacuum in terms of state authority, state legitimacy and state capacity; (ii) Competition for appropriation of state resources and the prestige linked with the exercise of state power. Those who govern typically control the economic life of their sphere of influence. Smith and Bell assert that:

Many of the beneficiaries are powerful as individuals within state structures and/or as leaders of societal groups. In contrast to typecasting of the DRC, the common denominator of the multiple conflicts is not so much ethnicity as the struggle for economic or political gain, around which ethnic identity is manipulated.¹¹

Indeed, mineral resource predation and entitlement claims over land juxtapose many criminal individuals and groups to compete violently for control and access to loot resources; and, (iii) Implications of the influence of Rwanda on DRC affairs. This relates in particular to the problem of perceived invasion of the DRC by Rwanda and the manner in which the subsequent wars of 1996 and 1998 were handled. The argument here is that as a way to consolidate state power, previous regimes in the DRC laid down structures for ethnopolitical cleavages that ferment and continue to feed today's conflict.

Against this backdrop, the determined efforts of MONUSCO, the African Union (AU) and friendly governments culminated in the Pretoria Peace Agreement of 2002, signed in Sun City, South Africa. It was this normative approach that generated political measures enabling a window of fragile peace to be crafted; it created a transitional government and ultimately paved the way for the 2005 constitutional referendum. Accordingly, in 2006 the DRC held its first multiparty presidential and legislative polls. The voter turnout was more than 70 per cent and the elections were largely peaceful and credible. Joseph Kabila emerged the winner with 58.5 percent of the vote. Five years later, in November 2011 and February 2012, the DRC conducted the second multiparty presidential and legislative polls, respectively. The second elections, however, raised concerns about the credibility and transparency of the electoral process. The voter turnout was 58.81 per cent. On 9 December 2011 the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) declared Joseph Kabila (independent presidential candidate)¹² winner of the election, with 48.95 per cent of the vote to 32.33 per cent of opposition front-runner Etienne Tshisekedi (of the Union pour la Democratie et le Progres Social), provoking violent protests and looting in the capital, Kinshasa.

In some ways it is remarkable that two consecutive multiparty elections were held in the DRC between 2006 and 2011; since the start of independence in 1960 there had been no such democratic dispensation. Yet, shockingly high levels of violence and peacelessness are unrelenting. For this reason, there is growing cynicism about elections alone in the DRC strengthening democratisation and sustaining development and a 'culture of peace.'¹³ The two ballots, hyped as milestones in directing the country out of decades of civil conflict and poverty and beginning to reconcile ethnic tensions,

are turning out to yield far too few dividends for the country's human security and development prospects. The latest human security indicators depict a depressing state of affairs. In effect, the DRC ranked 142 out of 193 countries on the UN Development Programme's 2006 Human Development Index; 176 out of 182 in 2009; and in 2011 the DRC ranked 187 out of 187 countries.¹⁴ Currently, the DRC is the second poorest country in the world; with three in five people living on less than US\$1.25 per day; 61 per cent of the population between six and 11 years not attending school regularly; seven out of ten people in rural areas without access to potable water; an estimated one in 100 births resulting in the death of the mother; and, almost one in three children under five years severely malnourished. In addition, with a youth bulge of 47.1 per cent of the population between the ages of 0 to 14, uneducated and unemployed, the country is nurturing a significant security threat because these youths are vulnerable to join militia insurgent groups motivated by the lure of profit and wealth from rebel plunder and resource predation.

How can we connect elections with socio-economic conditions in the DRC? What is the missing link between electoral democratic transition, human security and development in the DRC?

Conceptual clarification

The following preliminary remarks serve to explain why three separate topics in this paper are addressed together, viz. democratisation, human security and development. Conflict and peace are omnipresent conditions of human existence. Essentially, the notion of a 'post-conflict' state describes the relationship between conflict, reconstruction and development. Notionally, a post-conflict phase is reached when a country that has been going through a period of prolonged armed conflict reaches a treaty and signs a peace agreement or another event marks the 'official end' of war and signals the commencement of recovery and/or 'reconstruction' work. However, transitions from war to peace are not smooth. In the case of the DRC, the Pretoria Accord in 2002 marked a post-conflict episode. This window ushered in a range of actors and strategies to undertake and manage the process of building peace and/or reconstruction.¹⁵

Fragility

Fragility defines the capacity of weakness of a country in terms of its competence to accomplish core responsibilities to its citizenry.¹⁶ The factors that generate fragile state conditions differ from one country to another owing to a variety of historical causes of the conflict and different political, economic and geographical contexts. The DRC essentially lacks the capability and/or will to accomplish four critical government responsibilities, namely to: (i) foster an environment conducive to sustainable and equitable economic growth; (ii) establish and maintain legitimate, transparent, and accountable political institutions; (iii) secure its population from violent conflict and

control its territory; and, (iv) meet the basic human needs of its population. Notionally, it is not a failed state. It is simply not capacitated to respond to the needs of its citizens. The resources in the DRC are usually drawn away from the development and human security needs that can consolidate democracy.

Peace, violence and peacebuilding

Post-conflict peacebuilding (or post-conflict reconstruction) is defined here as being concerned with ‘reconstruction’ of security ‘needs of countries emerging from violent conflict, including the needs of affected populations; prevent escalation of disputes; avoid relapse into violence; address the root causes of conflict; and consolidate sustainable peace.’¹⁷ As well, it includes the restoration of health and education issues, infrastructure development, macro- and micro-economic reforms. A fundamental element in the description draws from the idea of ‘reconstruction’, which denotes the provision of ‘recovery’ in a preferred manner or way. The emphasis here is not just on intermediaries facilitating ‘recovery’, it ought to be on ‘recovery’ facilitated in a preferred way with the affected people. Conceptually, this emphasis connotes indispensable forms of participatory and consultative processes that sustain the processes bridging and linking government, policies, citizenry and the quality of living of the affected communities. Accepting this normative corollary, then, post-conflict peacebuilding in the context of the DRC should refer to the ‘efforts that seek to transform potentially violent social relations into sustainable peaceful relations and outcomes,’¹⁸ in an effective and efficient way and within the framework of local community control. The idea should thus involve initiating strategies regarding reconciliation in relation to justice, security and politics. According to John Paul Lederach, peace in that context is seen metaphorically not merely as a stage in time or a condition. It is a dynamic social construct.¹⁹ The ultimate goal of the array of activities therefore (undertaken by local, national, regional and/or international actors) is to eradicate the root causes of conflict and lay foundations to sustain social justice and longer-term cooperation between groups.

Johan Galtung distinguished between ‘negative peace’ and ‘positive peace’. Whereas negative peace denotes the absence of direct or ‘visible’ violence between groups, the idea of positive peace describes the absence of both direct and indirect or ‘invisible’ violence that threaten the economic, social and cultural well-being and the identity of individual human beings and groups.²⁰

	Negative peace	Positive peace
Aim	Circumvent armed conflict and human rights abuse.	Achieve social cohesion, social justice, eliminate structural and cultural violence.
Characteristics	Absence of war or direct violence; Recognised between states (in intrastate conflicts) and between primary protagonists (in intrastate and/or asymmetric conflicts); Require and use military hardware to guarantee peace.	Absence of visible (direct) and invisible (structural and cultural) violence; Decline in level of direct violence.
Strategies	Peace agreement, regular free and fair elections, peacemaking, and peacekeeping usually over short and mediumterm (i.e., emergency and transitional) phase of conflict.	Multi-dimensional, multi-sectoral, multi-levelled and multi-staged process and sustained long-term (i.e., peacebuilding) cooperation between groups and eradication of root causes of conflict.


Spectrum

Figure 14.1: Negative and positive peace

Source: Adapted from Galtung (1996)

Galtung thus delineated three types of violence, viz. direct, structural and cultural violence. From this conception, three complementary approaches to peace are derived: (i) peacekeeping (the aim of which is an immediate end to violence and hostilities); (ii) peacemaking (which aims to resolve conflict peacefully through mediation and good offices; and, (iii) peacebuilding (which focuses on the root causes of the conflict to achieve sustainable peace). This scholarship has contributed immensely to broadening the ability of policy-makers, peace-builders and academia in terms of theory and practice in societies emerging from violent conflict.

In the DRC, complex forms of visible and invisible violence exist as discussed above in the section on the nature of conflict. These forms of violent social turmoil include social, economic, institutional, political, and ecological obstructions that have become entrenched and accordingly demand creative, multi-dimensional and strategic intervention.



Figure 14.2: Types of violence in DRC

Source: Modified from Galtung (1996)

Democracy

Democracy as a concept virtually defies definition.²¹ There is no single archetype for democracy, no single unique set of institutions distinctive of democracy. However, an underlying general principle revolves around extant social contract between state and citizens. An inherent element in the contract embraces the role of the state that ought to accomplish mandatory responsibilities over its citizens to ensure security, peaceful and mutual relationships, equal access to economic resources and enhanced livelihoods. How? Certainly, the agenda of any post-conflict peacebuilding intervention varies from one conflict context to another and according to the significance given to the process. Accordingly, in this chapter, the conception of democracy describes a system of government that embodies, in a variety of institutions and mechanisms, the ideal of political power based on the will of the people.²² This characterisation is important because it can emphasise those elements of a political system in the context of the DRC that can be representative of and responsive to citizenry.

The idea of responsiveness describes the degree of capability by range of actors (government leaders, national organisations including multilateral and community-based agencies) and a set of strategies (short-term and long-term) to support security and development in the DRC. Based on this construction, three essential conditions are requisite for political democracy, viz. (i) existence of competition; (ii) participation; and, (iii) respect for civil liberties. Fundamentally, democratic elections are the basis of the authority of any representative government. Democracies are based on the decentralisation of authority as opposed to authoritarian systems; decision-making is consultative and respects the views of the people as opposed to concentration in the hands of a few possessing unchallengeable authority. Citizens hold their leaders accountable for their public actions. In this way, actors and strategies can respond appropriately to the needs of their communities.

In generic terms, therefore, democratisation may be understood as a process by which the country adopts a democratic regime. Essentially, the notion denotes a process of gradually introducing more participatory politics, including elections and the creation of a civil society supportive of tolerant, pluralistic politics through adherence to constitutionally enshrined rules of the game.²³ Democratisation in a positive sense thus involves bringing about the end of an undemocratic regime, inauguration of a democratic regime, and then consolidation of a democratic system. The process presupposes a transition between regimes, that is, a phase of change and/or transformation from one state to another along a democracy continuum. Affirming the assertion above, Sandbrook postulates a two-phased model to characterise the phenomenon of democratisation.²⁴

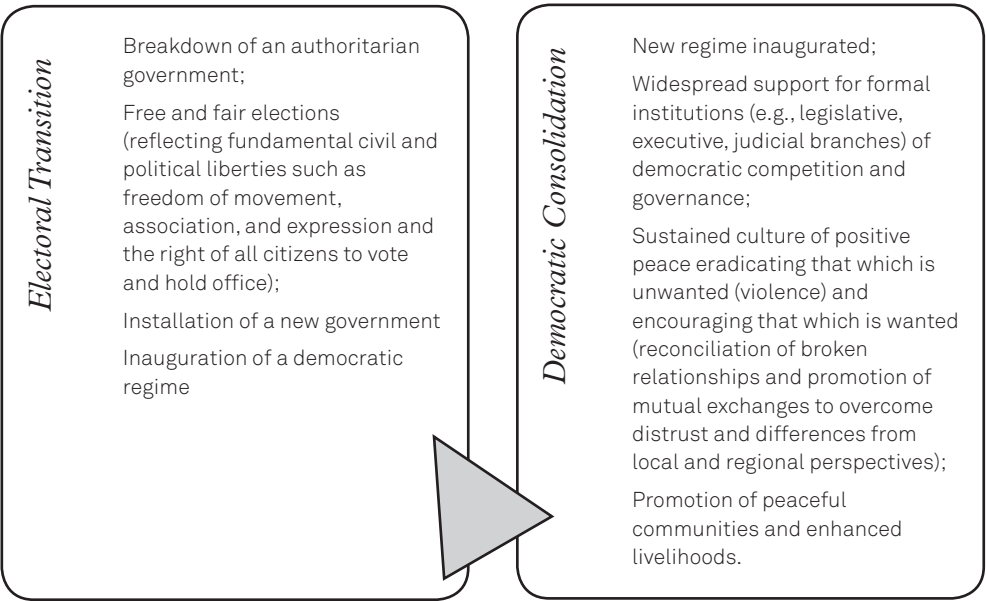


Figure 14.3: The phases of democratisation

Source: Adapted from Sandbrook (2000)

A significant dimension to highlight is that the essence of democratisation and its consolidation is eroded when in between recurring elections rulers administer with absolutism, for example in Angola, Swaziland and Zimbabwe (and as happened in Libya and Egypt, culminating in the tragic overthrow of former presidents Muammar Gaddafi and Hosni Mubarak).

Democratic consolidation therefore embraces shifts (i.e. transformations) in ‘political culture’ in which the norms, procedures, and expectations of democracy become so internalised that actors routinely and instinctively conform to the written (and unwritten) rules of the game, even when they are in conflict and compete intensely.²⁵ The process underscores the challenge of making new democracies secure, extending their life expectancy beyond the short-term, protecting them against regression to authoritarian governance, and building dams against eventual ‘reverse waves’.²⁶ Consolidation in the DRC therefore requires inclusivity and ownership of the whole process, in terms of norms and the behaviour of the elite, intermediate and public actors.

Level	Norms and beliefs	Behaviour
Government actors (<i>Elite</i>)	Most significant leaders of opinion, culture, business, and social organisations believe in the legitimacy of democracy. These beliefs are manifest in their public rhetoric, ideology, writings and symbols.	Leaders of government, state institutions and significant political parties and interest groups respect one another’s right to compete peacefully for power, eschew violence, and obey the laws, the constitution and mutually accepted norms of political conduct. Elites avoid rhetoric that would incite their followers to violence, intolerance or illegal methods. Political leaders do not use the military for political advantage.
National organisations including academics and clergy (<i>Middle-level actors</i>)	All politically significant parties, interest groups and social movements endorse (or at least, do not reject) the legitimacy of democracy and the country’s constitutional rules and institutions.	No politically significant party, interest group, institution or movement seeks to overthrow democracy or use fraud or violence as a deliberate tactic in pursuit of power or other political goals.

Citizens (Grassroots)	A critical mass (more than 70 per cent) believes that democracy is preferable to any other form of governance.	Ordinary citizens do not routinely use violence, fraud, or other illegal means to express their political preferences or pursue their political interests.
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Figure 14.4: Indicators of democratic consolidation

Source: Diamond, L. in Diamond, L. (ed.) (1999)

Democratic consolidation

Essentially, there are three general tasks any regime must undertake to become consolidated, viz.: (i) democratic deepening, which involves making formal structures of democracy more liberal, accountable, representative, and accessible to all citizens; (ii) political institutionalisation, which involves strengthening formal representative and governmental structures of democracy so that they become more coherent, complex, autonomous, and adaptable and thus more capable, effective, valued, and binding; and, (iii) regime performance, which describes the ability of a regime to generate positive policy outputs consistently to build broad political legitimacy and respond to eventualities over time.²⁷ A democracy is therefore consolidated when it is made stable, vibrant, efficient and accountable. For that reason, the process is complex and iterative and takes into account the national conditions, which often rely upon power-sharing.²⁸

Therefore, in order to promote development and ‘do no harm’ in the DRC, regular elections ought to constitute key ingredients for democratisation, good governance, the rule of law and promotion of human security and development. Longer-term focused strategies should place emphasis on addressing the root causes and structural factors underlying the conflict (such as poverty, political repression, widening socio-economic divides and ethnic cleavages) which can, if left unattended, escalate into violence. The efforts of government, regional and international actors, including community-based agencies, should seek out to achieve broad-based reconciliation and economic growth, promote and protect human and minority rights, foster inclusive and democratic spaces through dialogue and collaboration so that different views are incorporated in decision-making.

Security

The question of security has long been an integral feature of the broader international peace-building and integration agenda. Traditionally, security was narrowly defined as the protection of territorial integrity, stability, and vital interests of states through the use of political, legal, or coercive instruments at the state or international level. According to Barry Buzan, this perception subsequently reduced the complex notion to a mere derivative term, a synonym for power.²⁹ In the 1990s the concept was broadened to provide a suitable framework for proposing multi-dimensional and integrated solutions

to complex social problems in development and respect for human rights. While there is no single definition of the term, the consensus of the new discourse asserts a broader and more holistic framework of security, which incorporates a shift of focus from a state-centred to a people-centred approach. Throughout this essay, the term is used broadly to: (i) denote the means for assessing the root causes of fragile states; (ii) propose adequate policies for resolving social violence; and (iii) provide the means for building sustainable peace and development. Human security therefore deals with the capacity to identify threats, to avoid them when possible, and to mitigate their effects when they do occur. In addition, it means helping victims cope with the consequences of the widespread insecurity resulting from a derailed process of democratisation, human rights violations and massive poverty and under-development. Despite the analytical problem of introducing too many variables that may not necessarily link together in the operationalisation, the approach is significant in that it introduces the notion of cross-sectoral heterogeneous security complexes, as well as addressing the social aspects of security and how people or societies construct and/or 'securitise' threats from the individual and society to the state and sub-region.

Development

Development typically refers to the processes and strategies through which societies and states seek to achieve more prosperous and equitable standards of living. The concept is also an area of controversy in terms of distinction between economic growth and sustainable development. Despite the controversy, there is general consensus that whereas economic growth defines quantitative intensification in terms of goods produced, the idea of sustainable development adds a qualitative dimension to the process, so that the outcomes add value and improve the quality of life of the citizens. In this chapter, the term is employed to describe the processes of achieving a stable democracy that promotes the qualitative economic well-being of its citizens in equitable, compassionate and environmentally sustainable ways. Although the description revolves around contextual political participation, human security and distribution of and access to resources, it is significant in that it recognises development as an iterative process and an end in relation to the material and immaterial dimensions of welfare and safety.

Therefore, the link between elections, security and development is an important domain. It is customary to consider stability as typical, and instability as an atypical condition, because most societies experience failing statehood as abnormal and disruptive of structural and social relationships. It is therefore not inappropriate to treat the subjects of democracy and human security together in considering development issues in the DRC. It is a fact that establishing a legitimate government, strengthening its institutions and improving its capacity to provide security and development, based on principles of democratic governance and the rule of law, are critical to entrench enduring (positive) peace and improve the living standards of the majority of citizens currently living in squalor.

Discussion

The DRC has endured a long, difficult and brutal chapter in its history of independence, characterised by chaos, turmoil, instability, violence and one of the most brutal wars Africa has witnessed to date.³⁰ Indeed, throughout her various incarnations as the Congo Free State (1885-1908), the Belgian Congo (1908-1960), the Congo Republic (1960-1971), Zaire (1971-1997) and finally the Democratic Republic of the Congo (since 1997), the DRC has not known genuine peace.³¹ Moreover, after many decades of negative interactions, this history of animosity demonstrably militarised social life, politics and the economy. A vicious cycle of human rights abuses, hostility and fear envelop and entrap citizens, particularly women and girls, but also men and whole neighbourhoods. At the political level, continuing violence undermines countrywide fledgling democratic hard work and dilutes peace initiatives that are requisite pillars for reconciliation and development. It also promotes authoritarian tendencies at local and national governance structures, which reduce accountability and distort representation in policy-making. In greater part, this explains the endemic inefficient provision of services across the country. The situation exacerbates physical hardships such as poverty and under-development, including ethnic tensions over competition for resources such as land and overall destruction of infrastructure. Furthermore, it becomes a hotbed for other criminal syndicate activities such as resource predation and looting, corruption, human trafficking and proliferation of small and light weapons.

Let me highlight that notwithstanding the preceding depressing narrative and the intimidating logistic challenges and attempted manipulation of the electoral process in the 2006 and 2011 elections, the author takes great care throughout not to overstate the assumption that democratisation is ineffective in sustaining regeneration of peaceful communities and existence in the DRC.³² Based on the country's conflict dynamics, as situated earlier in the chapter, a holistic and typical scope of tasks for regeneration ought to be organised around four inextricably linked issue areas, viz.: (i) security; (ii) political transition, governance and participation; (iii) human rights, justice and reconciliation; and (iv) socio-economic development, demonstrated below. Notionally, a gendered approach and the role of women are significantly necessitated across all pillars and form indispensable building blocks that seek to ultimately leverage enabling conditions for strengthening social justice. Thus a constructive outcome in any one of the pillars depends on the successful integration and interaction across them. Therefore, to underscore democratisation alone will not be enough to sustain community regeneration in the DRC.

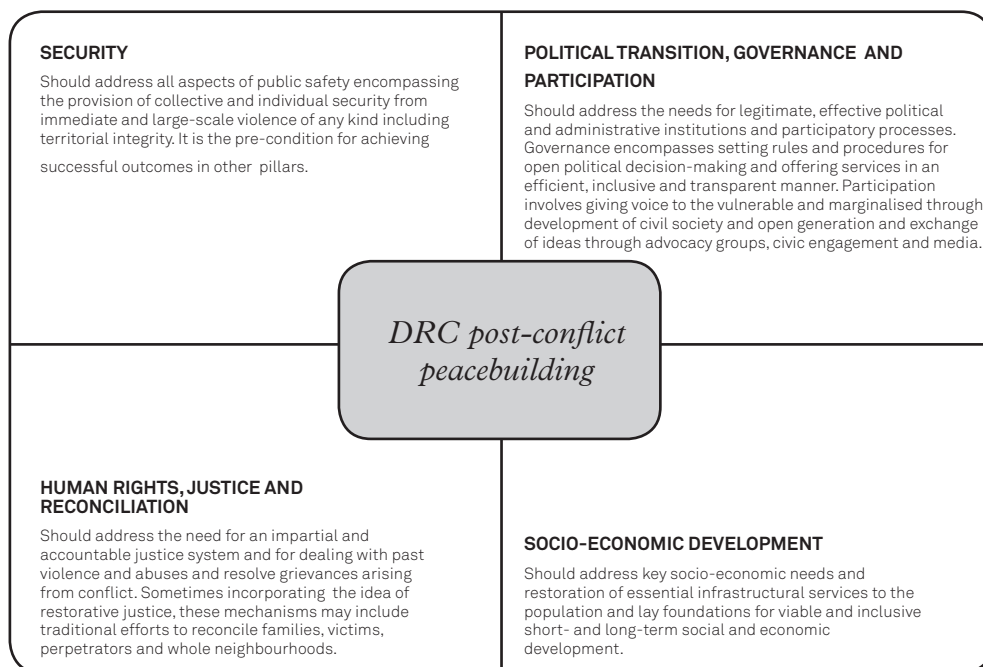


Figure 14.5: Four pillars of reconstruction in DRC

Source: Sylvester Bongani Maphosa

The 2002 peace agreement returned peace to most of the country. The stage was set for different actors and strategies for post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding work. Relations with the international community reopened and paved the way for political and economic reforms. From 2003 to 2005 the transitional government implemented rational political and macro-economic policies that laid the foundations for growth, for example, driving the constitutional referendum project and bringing hyperinflation under control. The fact that polls were conducted in 2006 and 2011 indicates that elections are becoming a regular exercise; it is certainly a milestone toward consolidating recovery. After the 2006 first multi-party elections when a new legitimate regime was in place, relative calm was again restored. Intermittent flickers of buoyancy are revealed along governance and socio-economic trajectories, though often ephemeral. To improve governance challenges, the DRC government adopted a governance contract programme in 2007, which based its objectives on two broad areas focused on security (including security sector reform and demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants) and on economic reform (including decentralisation, transparency, public finance management, public enterprises and mining). Naturally the DRC is today more stable than a decade ago; its economy demonstrates a positive growth trajectory, albeit slowly. For instance, the real gross domestic product growth, estimated at about US\$12 billion in 2010, was 6.1 per cent and compared favourably to the 5 per cent estimated both globally and for the African region in the same year.³³

Moreover, despite the global economic recession that cut economic growth in 2009 to less than half of its 2008 level, in 2010 to 2011 growth returned to 6 to 7 per cent,³⁴ helping to restore confidence among investors and other partners.

While it is true that electoral democracy does have the capacity to facilitate the resolution of political and socio-economic problems, the frequency of elections should not be regarded as the only measure of democracy in the DRC, because regular elections can be held even if there is no democracy. The extent to which institutions, actors and relationships are (vertically and horizontally) created and transformed from violent to non-violent culture is the key determinant of whether or not democracy will endure to leverage peace and development in the DRC. There is abounding evidence that not all elections have led to peace and development. In some cases, elections have been a liability and have either ushered in authoritarian leaders or perpetuated their stay in power, for example in Angola, Senegal, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. The democratic dividend and prospects for peace and development in these countries continue to elude millions and subject many to protracted socio-economic deprivation and authoritarian governance.³⁵ Thus, in this respect, democratisation is reduced to electoral democracy skewed on the ‘fallacy of electoralism’ and ignores the political reality of non-electoral dimensions of community demands. The emerging realisation is that rebuilding the DRC is not simply a process of conducting elections. It calls for more integrated approaches that will place emphasis not only on electoral political recovery but also on non-electoral political dimensions, such as the transformation of infrastructure for peace and actors within those structures to promote healing and reconciliation of groups affected by protracted social violence.

Lastly, regional dynamics present complex dilemmas that have a negative impact on the transitional trajectory of the DRC. Not only has the Central African region never had an established democracy, but also, most of the region’s countries (Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Sudan and the Central African Republic) are critically weak states and their problems tend to have a ‘spill-over’ effect, which retards democratic consolidation and peacebuilding in the DRC. The limited capacity of these governments to control substantial portions of their territories effectively, combined with recurrent intrastate conflicts generating large flows of refugees and internal displacements, creates immense challenges for the DRC’s democratisation, peacebuilding and development endeavours. Evidence includes widespread and unabated cross-border violence; abductions (for forced labour and sex); and wanton disregard of the country’s institutions by both rebels and state security agencies; and flow of small and light weapons in the region. These regional dynamics affect ever-growing numbers of people and increasingly make it difficult to resolve the crisis.³⁶

Conclusion

The DRC is vacillating between a democratic and authoritarian mode of governance against a background of squalor, poverty and protracted violent conflict. Given the

complexity related to democratic transition and peacebuilding, it is essential to appreciate that transitions can be tough, protracted and inconclusive, such as in Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Somalia, Ivory Coast, South Africa and South Sudan. It is impossible to pin down the success and/or failure of the DRC to a single cause. The lesson is that we cannot assume that the advance to democracy will be unproblematic, given the disparities and cleavages that exist in Africa. Electoral transitions and democratic consolidation are integrated processes and therefore necessitate integrated approaches that will focus not only on a set of electoralist, institutionalist, and proceduralist criteria, but also on non-electoral elements such as prevention of cultural and structural (that is, invisible) violence, including transformation in emotion, attitude, behaviour and contradiction, based on people's mutual acceptance of past violence and hurt within themselves and between themselves and others.

Indeed, as we laud the regular conducting of elections in most African countries, in the DRC great caution should be exercised lest we fall into what Ake calls the 'democratisation of disempowerment',³⁷ that is, nurturing a process whereby multiparty elections in the DRC will allow for the rotation of self-interested elites of various political parties while the majority of citizens remain powerless and disconnected from the political system. As contended in this paper, the critical aspect of true democracy should not be about multi-party and regular elections alone, but should also address the legitimacy of ethnic demands in the political system. Many years of protracted social unrest and poor governance in the DRC have not only taken lives, destroyed livelihoods and broken down social, political and economic infrastructure, but also undermined the overall social capital of the nation. Integrated approaches should hence address a wide range of issues: relief, rehabilitation, resettlement (land issues) and reconstruction, as well as regaining humanity and working on reconciliation. Indeed, building enduring peace, democracy and better livelihoods in the DRC calls for a transformation of institutions, norms, behaviours and attitudes, based on: (i) commitment among the elites to democracy, upholding of democratic principles and behaving in accordance with democratic norms; (ii) firm-rooted belief at the public level that democracy is the best form of government; and (iii) firm commitment to democracy by non-state actors in strengthening and deepening democracy.³⁸ These are over and above the generic minimal requirements of free and fair elections, universal suffrage and the right to run for office, freedom of expression, alternative sources of information and freedom of association.³⁹

This chapter has attempted to show how political instability in the DRC is strongly, negatively correlated with general ethno-political issues including human security and provision of basic social services such as education, health and economic infrastructure. This is the essence of the poverty trap in the DRC, which feeds on and is fed by unrelenting violence.

Recommendations

Democratisation, building peace and enhancing livelihoods (development) are complex undertakings necessitating multi-dimensional, multi-sectoral, multi-levelled and multi-staged process approaches to recovery. Indeed there is no single project or actor that can do everything. Democratic progress in the DRC will therefore be strategic when it (i) addresses entrenched ethnic fissures and tensions; (ii) addresses political and economic cleavages around access to resources and state power; (iii) stops destructive dynamics of regionally related violence and factors; (iii) is inclusive (of winners and losers) in governance and service delivery; (iv) leverages a relatively small action to a larger effect; (v) results in positive and tangible changes in livelihoods; and, (vi) creates momentum for change.

In principle, it is therefore essential that the government, international and regional actors, including national and community-based agencies, tailor and target policy interventions more effectively in the following key areas:

- Promote institutional reforms, especially around human rights and the rule of law; security governance; natural resource governance; women, peace and security; youth empowerment and cross-border initiatives.
- Promote and implement mechanisms for sub-regional monitoring of member states and institutionalise procedures for peer review. While a sub-regional strategy is not a panacea, it does proffer a systematic process to complement tailor-made national efforts at overcoming the multifarious challenges besetting the Great Lakes region. The ultimate test would thus lie in putting into practice the sub-regional strategy in a way that is flexible, case-sensitive and reflective of the needs of each state.
- Encourage bottom-up and collaborative ownership of initiatives by adopting a grassroots and inclusive approach; that is, engaging local stakeholders within and outside the institutions of government. Furthermore, promote psychosocial healing and local reconciliation processes based on traditional structures and mechanisms to build trust and ensure legitimacy and people commitment.
- Promote poverty alleviation, because political instability is strongly, negatively correlated to human security. The causal relationship between poverty, conflict and state failure is undoubtedly complex, as poverty fuels conflict and poverty itself is deepened by conflict.
- Promote greater democracy and improved human rights in the fragile eastern districts. Despite the fact that democracy does not necessarily reduce conflict levels, in communities where democratic processes function reasonably well, policies to maintain and develop democratic institutions will reduce the risk of violent conflict. The DRC leadership should take responsibility for lack of progressive stewardship, accountability and poor governance.

Notes and references

- 1 This chapter is an expanded version of a policy brief, *Democratic progress and regress: How can elections in Africa nurture human security and better livelihoods*, AISA No.73 (2012). Available at <http://www.ai.org.za/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/04/No.-73.-Democratic-Progress-and-Regress.-How-can-Elections-in-Africa-Nurture-Human-Security-and-Better-Livelihoods.pdf>
- 2 AISA, 2011. *Africa: Facts and figures*. Pretoria: AISA.
- 3 According to a UN security panel of experts, the mineral wealth in the DRC has been a major factor causing external intervention and protracted armed violence. See UN Security Council: Final report of the panel of experts on illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, S/2002/1146 (October 16th 2002); UN Security Council: Final report of the panel of experts on illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, S/2003/1027 (October 23rd 2003).
- 4 DR of Congo: Country Brief 9 Available at <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/AFRICA/CONG>
- 5 See Coghlan, B., Brennan R.J. & Ngoy P., 2006. Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo: A nationwide survey. *The Lancet*, 367, pp. 44-51; Lily, D. & Bertram A., 2008. Targeting humanitarian assistance in post-conflict DRC. *Humanitarian Exchange*, No. 4, December; International Centre for Migration, 2011. Protecting the health of women and girls. Available at <http://icmhd.wordpress.com/page/2/>.
- 6 The mission was originally called the United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) until 30 June 2010, when pursuant to resolution 1925 (2010) of 28 May 2010, by which the UN Security Council extended the mandate of MONUC, it was decided that the mission should be called MONUSCO.
- 7 See UNSC Resolution 1991 (2011) adopted by the Security Council at its 6568th meeting on 28 June 2011 (S/RES/1991 (2011)). See also UNGA Agenda item 146 on approved resources for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012 (A/C.5/66/14).
- 8 See Smith, J. & Bell, E., 2010. *Governance in mining zones in North and South Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo*. International Alert Report: IFP Democratisation Cluster. Available at www.initiativesforpeacebuilding.eu
- 9 This term 'ethnopolitical' conflict was first coined by Edward Azar in the late 1970s and is now used widely to denote protracted social conflicts. See Austin, A., Fischer, M. & Ropers, N. (Eds), 2004. *Transforming ethno-political conflict*. The Berghoff Handbook. Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Smith, J. & Bell, E., 2010, op. cit., p. 6
- 12 Joseph Kabila belongs to the People's Party for Reconstruction and Democracy political party, but made a decision to stand for the presidential candidature as an independent.
- 13 Galtung describes a 'culture of peace' as the negation of 'cultural violence' and denotes all aspects of a culture that serve to justify and legitimise direct peace and structural peace. It also connotes positive peace.

- 14 The Human Development Index describes a composite measure (statistic) used to rank countries by level of human development based on comparative measures of life expectancy, literacy, education, security and standards of living or well-being. As well, it measures the impact of economic policies on quality of life and is used to distinguish whether a country is developed, developing or under-developed. 2006 HDI 142 out of 193 countries with an index of 0.512; 2009 HDI 176 out of 182 countries with an index of 0.360. See Human Development Report 2011 and 2007/08.
- 15 The term 'post-conflict peacebuilding' in this paper is used interchangeably with 'post-conflict reconstruction' to refer to a continuous process involving a broad range of actions aimed at consolidating positive peace (absence of direct, structural and cultural violence) over negative peace (absence of war or direct violence) by addressing the root causes of conflict and bolstering peace in the aftermath of violent conflict.
- 16 See Rice, S.E. & Patrick, S., 2008. *Index of state weakness in the developing world*. Washington: The Brookings Institute, p. 3.
- 17 AU 2006: par 14.
- 18 See Call, C.T. & Cook, S.E., 2003. On democratization and peacebuilding. *Global Governance*, 9(2), p.240; also refer to Call, C.T & Cousens, E.M., 2007. *Coping with crisis*. Working Paper Series. New York: International Peace Academy, p. 2.
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- 20 Galtung, J., 1996. *Peace by peaceful means: Peace and conflict, development and civilization*. Oslo: International Peace Research Institute, PRIO, p.1-3. See also Galtung, J., 1975. *War and defence: Essays in peace research*. Vol.1, pp.76-108.
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- 24 See Sandbrook, R., 2000. *Closing the circle: Democratisation and development in Africa*. Toronto: Between Lines.
- 25 Diamond, L., 1999. Consolidating democracy. In Diamond, L. (ed.), 1999. *Developing democracy*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 64-116.
- 26 Schedler, A., 1998. What is democratic consolidation? *Journal of Democracy*, 9(2), pp. 91-107
- 27 Diamond, op. cit.
- 28 Mindzie, M.A., 2009. Transitional justice, democratization and the rule of law. In Sriram, C.L. & Pillay, S. (Eds), 2009. *Peace versus justice? The dilemma of transitional justice in Africa*. Scottsville: UKZN Publishers, p. 113-134.

- 29 Buzan, B., 1991. *People, states and power: An agenda for international security studies in the post-cold war era*. 2nd ed. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester, pp. 4-7.
- 30 See Swart, G. (ed.), 2010. *A vanquished peace: Prospects for the successful reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of Congo*. Adonis and Abbey Ltd.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Pugh defines peaceful regeneration as a process of social, political and economic adjustment to, and underpinning of, conditions of relative peace in which the participants, not least those who have been disempowered and impoverished by violence, can begin to prioritise future goals beyond their immediate survival (2002, p.2). See Pugh, M. (ed.), 2002. *Regeneration of war-torn societies: Global Issues Series*. London: Macmillan Press.
- 33 See IMF World Economic Outlook, January update 2011. Available at www.imf.org/EBS/11/15
Also, note that the “Africa region” referred to here is Sub-Saharan Africa excluding the Arab northern countries.
- 34 See IMF World Economic Outlook, op.cit.
- 35 Zimbabwe, for instance, since attaining independence in 1980, has held more than seven crucial elections, but continues to be mired in endless socio-economic and political challenges, which erode the quality of life for the majority. In 2012 alone, 27 countries on the continent conducted elections. How has the vote translated to peace and development?
- 36 Whittaker, B.E., 2003. Refugees and the spread of conflict: Contrasting cases in Central Africa. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 38(2-3), pp. 211-231.
- 37 See Ake, C., 1996. *Democracy and development in Africa*. Washington: Brookings.
- 38 Bunbongkarn, S., 2001. The role of civil society in democratic consolidation in Asia. Available at www.apcss.org/Publications/.../Pub_GrowthGovernancech10.pdf.
- 39 O'Donnell draws from Robert Dahl's notion of polyarchy to outline a useful set of guidelines for democratic consolidation. See O'Donnell, G., 1996. Illusions about consolidation. *Journal of Democracy*, 7(2), pp. 32-46. See also Dahl, R., 1971. *Polyarchy: Participation and opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Peacebuilding in South Africa: cross-cultural implications

Alphonse Keasley

*We had the experience but missed the meaning. And approach to the
Meaning restores the experience in a different form . . .*

The Dry Salvages (No. 3 of *Four Quartets*)

T. S. Eliot¹

Introduction

In 2008, a new global seminar entitled *Diversity and Reconciliation: The South African Model*, became part of the University of Colorado Boulder (CU-B) curriculum. Though this course was not specifically focused on peacemaking and peacebuilding in Africa, the concept of reconciliation in the African context unquestionably played a prominent role in the class. As the 1988 Coloradan Yearbook² photograph illustrates, CU-B students were globally aware of the injustice that the South African Nationalist Party's virulent segregation – apartheid – was exacting from South African people's lives. In 1986 CU-B students demonstrated in support of dismantling apartheid in South Africa. It is befitting that 22 years later a course on South Africa has now appeared in the curriculum, through which another generation of students could learn from the people who exemplified being 'peacemakers when they could and warriors when they must', as Jaime Pinkham³ so eloquently expressed. As this chapter will underscore, much is to be learned about peacemaking and peacebuilding that is applicable in other cultural contexts. The course *Diversity and Reconciliation* argues that the long history of African societies' peacemaking, transitional justice and reconciliation practices provides a viable mechanism for others around the world to learn. Specifically, this global seminar focused on *ubuntu* – 'A person is a person through other people.'⁴

South Africa's demonstrated leadership on how to achieve peace, transitional justice and reconciliation – the trifecta of African peacemaking and peacebuilding – offers the world hope. As South African John Volmink⁵ stated:

Being part of a continent that is seen by the world to present only problems and no solutions, we, in South Africa, have a wonderful opportunity to rise to the challenge and to show the way forward in a world that itself seems to be torn by strife, conflict, suffering and hatred.

In fact, South Africa was chosen as the site for the Diversity and Reconciliation course for several reasons, but the reason that most aligns with this chapter is South Africa's unparalleled accomplishment as a model for young adults and future American peacemakers and peace-builders to learn from. As will be discussed in the section on education for humanising, young adults are in need of tools for envisioning and practising peacemaking. It should be understood that African peacemaking and peace-building are intentionally addressed rather than the American peace movement because of the long-standing cultural community practice of peacemaking in African societies. In general, African societies have understood that normative conflict is to be anticipated in the social fabric of any community. Consequently, the societies have also anticipated the place for peacemaking as a normal course of communal living. Further, many African societies have learned that normative conflict can escalate to intractable positioning, thus creating the need for regular peacebuilding. South Africa's successful application of *ubuntu* reflects its wisdom in understanding the normative conflict/peacemaking dynamic and intractable positioning/peacebuilding.

In contrast, Americans have witnessed their national public officials take conflict and intractable positioning to a disappointingly low level, as evidenced in the consistently low approval ratings of the recent congressional levels. Furthermore, Americans could easily find on many television stations otherwise well-educated individuals demonstrating how to maintain conflict without any redeeming expression of reasonable debate. Indeed, the founding guiding documents, such as the Bill of Rights, encourage freedom of expression and vigorous debate, but American history has shown that reason typically prevailed in even the most rancorous debates. Today, young American adults are left without many domestic models for rising above their passions in order to achieve that which is best for the community. The quest for peacemaking and peace-building philosophy and tools is a reasonable undertaking, particularly for young, socially conscious American university students. South Africa and *ubuntu* present such a site and philosophy-in-practice.

This chapter describes the goal of the course and the concomitant pedagogical research question: What experiences promote transformative learning for community peacemaking and peacebuilding involving the strategies of *ubuntu*, forgiveness, reconciliation for students from an individualistic, retributive justice-oriented society? It should be emphasised that South Africa and *ubuntu* are not being romanticised or being set up for unrealistic expectations; rather the country is being recognised for its achievements as well as its struggles toward an aspirational constitution that validates human dignity regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, sexuality or ability.

Transformational education for humanising living and peacemaking

Ostensibly, education is a futuristic activity in every society. We educate children for two major societal purposes: one, to learn the cultural values of the home society and two, to prepare for productive life, including skills for work and for mutual cooperative

living. In America, tragic events such as the 1999 Columbine High School (in Littleton, Colorado)⁶ shootings, the 2007 Virginia Tech University⁷ and the 2012 Aurora Movie Theater 'Dark Knight' massacre⁸ shootings alarmed the world to the reality that sometimes our students are not connecting the lessons learned in the classroom, for example in literature and other humanities courses, to moment-to-moment daily living. In fact, in American schools, significant attention is being paid to managing bullying: vicious taunting and intimidation of targeted individual children. Fortunately, most American schoolchildren do not perpetrate these destructive or violent conflict practices, but they witness violence and verbal assaults or may be the targets of such degradation. Conversely, the educational purpose of preparing for productive living, especially living cooperatively with others, is left to ad hoc incident-related training: in other words, when bullying and gun violence occur, it is then that the in-the-moment training for reducing incidents occurs.

Of course, school violence is not the province of American schools. In 2008, Benbenishty and Astor⁹ called for global collaboration on the study and prevention of school violence. Benbenishty and Astor, following up on a study by Akiba, LeTendre, Baker and Goesling,¹⁰ were prompted to call for this collaboration because of the many different ways in which school violence is defined and reported in various world countries. Principally, the study and prevention of school violence is to pursue empirical sociological studies around key sociological theories (strain, control and labelling theories) and associated intervention strategies. Indeed, all careful empirical research is warranted and essential to stem bullying and violence in school-aged children around the world. However, it is equally important for collaborative efforts to provide school-aged children with transformative educational practices that will allow them to internalise long-term practices of peacemaking and peacebuilding. As will be discussed later, peacemaking education does take place in a few countries' elementary and tertiary schooling, but for many children the opportunity is not offered until later as part of transformative education.

In discussing transformative education, scholars acknowledge that children develop their mindset, including thinking, feelings, beliefs, and ways of acting, from those who are responsible for children's socialisation. Clearly, parents and schools serve a critical role in children's socialisation and thus habits of mind. In essence, meaning perspective is constructed for children during the socialisation and acculturation period. However, it is typically in young adulthood that meaning perspective revision occurs to reduce the irrational and contradicting world into a less confusing experience. It is for this reason that scholars argue that transformative education is 'uniquely adult, abstract, idealised, and grounded in the nature of human communication'.¹¹ Three notable transformative learning theorists include Jack Mezirow,¹² who emphasises life-long learning and meaning perspective revision; Robert Boyd,¹³ who proceeds from a Jungian psychological basis of understanding how humans change meaning perspective in resolving personal dilemmas; and Paolo Friere,¹⁴ who addresses transformational

learning for social change and humanisation. It is Friere's theory that best aligns with the peacemaking and peacebuilding in the community context.

Brazilian educator and United Nations ambassador Paolo Freire is acknowledged worldwide as the premier advocate of transformative education for humanising living. Freire's writing addresses several interrelated transformative education topics, among others: 1) *Conscientização*, which, according to Freire's translator, is 'the term . . . [that] refers to learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality'; 2) consciousness of consciousness; and 3) dialogic communication. His focus on *conscientiaizacao* and 'ontological (the study of the) vocation of being' resonates well with *ubuntu* philosophy. Freire emphasises that 'ontological vocation of being' is the principal reason for living: to become more and more human with each experience in life. The humanising process is substantially aided through searching for and reconciling the contradictions in life for pursuing the 'ontological vocation of being.'

Best, McLaren and Nocella¹⁵ assert that Freire's critical pedagogy is rarely applied to conflict transformation. However, they do note that Lederach¹⁶ employed Freireian principles in developing his book, *Preparing for peace: Conflict transformation across cultures*, to discuss the 'dual level of transformative peacemaking'. Lederach wrote:

Paulo Freire, whose seminal work on pedagogy will inform numerous aspects of this book, suggests we understand social change as including both. I have found it useful to step back and look at the picture related to Freire's pedagogical framework. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) he uses literacy, learning to read and write, which seems to be a uniquely individual and personal agenda, as a tool for exploring and promoting social change. He refers to this as conscientization, awareness of self in context, a concept that simultaneously promotes personal and social transformation.

Here I believe is a fundamental paradox in the pursuit of peace. Peacemaking embraces the challenge of personal transformation, of pursuing awareness, growth, and commitment to change at a personal level. ...

In sum, the Freire folly suggests that transformative peacemaking upholds and pursues both personal and systemic change (p. 19-20).

First, Lederach pays tribute to Freire by using Freire's pedagogical framework for his work on *Preparing for peace*. As such, Lederach too shows that peacemaking and peacebuilding require diligent attention to the learning paradigm: peacemaking and peacebuilding are acquired skills. In addition, he affirms that peacemaking calls for a dedication to Mezirow's meaning perspective changes that dialogically support social change in the community. This dual level of transformative peacemaking continues to reverberate with the *ubuntu* worldview.

Though elementary and tertiary schooling is also limited in using Freireian conscientisation and the 'ontological vocation of being' for nurturing personal and

systemic change for peacemaking, it is indeed valuable to know that tools for humanising and reconciling the contradictions in the oftentimes irrational world do exist for adults to use for learning peacemaking and peacebuilding.

Freireian conscientisation is built on particular ways of behaving: first through *reflection* and then through *action*. In combination, reflection and action are referred to as praxis; a concept familiar to ancient Athenian educators and today's communication rhetoricians. Bell hooks,¹⁷ a student of Freire, has extended the Freireian *praxis* to blend it with Thich Nhat Hahn Buddhism thinking. Hooks urges all to seek peacemaking through integration of mind, body and soul. In essence, she espouses peacemaking *praxis* through wholeness of oneness with community in all of its thoughtfulness, emotions and feelings, and attention to the greater forces around us and within us. Like Freire, Hooks advocates education that promotes humanisation. As a prolific writer, scholar and speaker, she discusses her quest for creating a community of love. However, as a visionary, she speaks of the community of love with pragmatism in mind: there will be the need for love to overcome conflict and hate. She writes that she fully believes that love can conquer hate.

Although Freire developed transformative learning theory for teaching literacy in his native South America and in Africa, contemporaneous transformative learning has undergone a decidedly Western influence. Ntseane,¹⁸ from the University of Botswana, acknowledges this Western influence and raises the question: 'How can we make transformational learning culturally sensitive?' In particular, Ntseane challenges the idea that transformational learning theory is principally an individual-oriented activity rather than a collectivist-situated phenomenon. 'Given that the African learning context is about the need for social change, it not surprising collective creation of knowledge and development is privileged over individual or personal transformational learning'.¹⁹ She underscores the role that Afrocentricity and *ubuntu* play in Botswana's collectivist society and the culture's learning context. This learning context is important to note for understanding meaning-making in a cultural context for humanisation and peacemaking. Similar to Hooks, Ntseane firmly believes that new transformative understandings result from the intersections 'of other individuals, family, groups, ancestral spirits, community or culture'.²⁰

Other highly influential American scholars and researchers, such as Patricia Hill Collins,²¹ Beverly Crenshaw,²² Peggy McIntosh²³ and numerous others who have followed in the scholarly footsteps of Collins, Crenshaw and McIntosh, have addressed transformational learning theory for humanisation and peacemaking. However, it is Ntseane's discussion that is essential for understanding the interplay of: 1) individualistic and collectivist society's approaches to peacemaking and peacebuilding; and 2) transformative learning theory. In essence, making meaning from peacemaking and peacebuilding is most effectively accomplished when individuals are in the position to assume responsibility for their assumptions, presuppositions, values, and feelings. Further, when those who are responsible for the socialisation of younger individuals are

less influential, then the formerly dependent individual can engage independently in self-reflection, critical reflection and self-critical reflection, three of the key elements of meaning perspective revisions. For those from individualistic retributive-justice oriented societies, this period of independence comes while young adults are in post-secondary settings or in a separate living arrangement. This would suggest that peacemaking and peacebuilding are substantially delayed and that the cultural influences of retribution gain in saliency. In a later section that will follow, evidence of this delay and meaning perspective revision will be discussed.

On the other hand, in collectivist societies in which *ubuntu* and reconciliation are the cultural practices, the opportunity for peacemaking and peacebuilding can begin at an earlier age. This contrast in societies would seem to make a significant difference in the quality of meaning perspective revision. Stated differently, if children are socialised and acculturated by adults who themselves are culturally sensitive to peacemaking and peacebuilding as a treasured cultural value, the society benefits in richer and deeper ways. The children are not cultivating the concept of peacemaking and peacebuilding as a constant in their lives, nor are they investing in comprehending a completely new way of thinking, feeling and valuing. Teaching children about peacemaking while they are in elementary school would be ideal; however, the occurrence of this in individualistic, retributive-based societies is rare during the early schooling years. Ntseane and Volmink are indeed correct that the continent of Africa has something to share with the world.

Social engagement and *ubuntu*

As alluded to throughout this chapter, the CU-B Global Seminar *Diversity and Reconciliation: The South Africa Model* was originally – and somewhat simplistically – conceived of as a course that addressed ways to improve American racial/ethnic relations through a study of South Africa’s successful reconciliation and integration around racial/ethnic diversity after a protracted and violent civil war. American students were expected to learn about race relations in another part of the world and then to return to the United States to apply South African practices to appropriate situations that could benefit from reconciliation. In the first year, the experience for the students and the professor was so expansive and profound that South Africa undeniably engaged the professor’s intellectual imagination. After the first year, new concepts were added to studying reconciliation, including *ubuntu*, forgiveness, the humanisation/dehumanisation/rehumanisation²⁴ processes, divided history and divided societies, the United Nation’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the South African application and peacemaking. The true benefit of the cross-cultural experience surfaced and students were able to gain that much more from the cross-cultural experience in unexpected ways. A treasure trove that included new cultural knowledge, probing philosophical depth, and international citizenry revealed itself to the students and professor.

Initially, the course was designed to spark young people's imagination for renewing and continuing to improve cultural diversity and inclusion in the United States while simultaneously becoming more knowledgeable about another nation's approaches to the same societal matters. Moreover, the students were to learn practices of inclusion, which in this classroom context meant learning about extending beyond the presence of people from many cultural backgrounds. Rather, inclusion focused on how to use cultural differences to influence decision-making and moving toward truly multicultural societal institutions – that is, governmental institutions, marriage practices and educational curricula.

The course is comprised of three different segments: 1) the pre-international travel; 2) travel to Soweto, Johannesburg, Pretoria and Cape Town; and 3) post-international travel. The first course segment oriented the students to the general concept of reconciliation in the United States and South Africa, an overview to the history of South Africa and a cultural view of South Africa as described in Nelson Mandela's autobiography *Long walk to freedom*. The international travel, as described below, was built around: 1) South African lecturers' presentations; 2) visits to museums and other truth-telling sites; and 3) discussions that allowed for comparisons between the United States and South Africa. The post-international travel segment required students to apply knowledge gained during the international travel to a situation in the United States. This segment was the moment for cross-cultural application in the best transformative learning tradition – Freire's social change.

As noted above, the course began with an introductory discussion of reconciliation. The concept of reconciliation, as typically understood, is thought of as the *end result* of conflict. In fact, scholarly literature points to various ways to understand the concept of reconciliation, including:

- 1) Simple co-existence, in which former adversaries agree to abide by the existing laws and vow to cease all violence toward each other;
- 2) Liberal social solidarity (J. Osiel), in which former adversaries live together as well as respect each other as fellow citizens such that they listen to each other, debate in a give-and-take manner about public policy, build on areas of common ground and deliberate on matters to reach principled compromises;
- 3) Robust reconciliation that involves truth-telling, non-religious and religious forgiveness, mercy rather than retributive justice, shared comprehensive visioning and harmony in the manner presented through liberal social solidarity. South Africa is routinely cited as the exemplar of this form of reconciliation.

The course pursues the study of reconciliation as *Robust reconciliation and liberal social solidarity*.²⁵ Specifically, the course engages the concept of reconciliation as a **process** and an outcome that necessarily extends beyond leaders who sign formal agreements. Robust reconciliation involves the majority of the society members in forging a

harmonious vision for all of the people of the country, beginning with truth-telling. Though controversial, the reconciliation process is also guided by the aspirational Republic of South Africa (RSA) Constitution, which is based on the United Nation's 1948 Declaration of Human Rights. Robust reconciliation, the RSA Constitution and Nelson Mandela's autobiography, along with the several frameworks, guide students' observations and growth in the study of reconciliation.

The first essential component of the study of robust reconciliation is the invited lecturers, with whom the instructor of record has discussed the emphasis of the course on robust reconciliation. Each lecturer brings his/her disciplinary focus to the subject of reconciliation in the following areas:

History – in which the divided history of indigenous black South Africans, formerly enslaved Malay and other people of Asian descent, former Dutch immigrants/South African Afrikaners, the British, and the so-called coloured South Africans is presented and discussed and the resultant worldviews are reconciled;

Political science – which addresses the South African TRC, its role in creating the foundation for the reconciliation process in the greater South African society and its significance for ongoing reconciliation practices in the greater society;

Cognitive psychology – emphasises social change in South Africa and the contact hypothesis in achieving justice in the reconciliation process, as well as progress in reconciliation in the everyday lives of South African citizens; this lecture is based on research conducted at the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation;

International relations – 'Introduction to human rights and reconciliation in Southern Africa' is a preliminary discussion about the institutional human rights framework, the rights issues related to the TRC process and the limitations of the TRC and an update on the sentiments on the ground 16 years after the advent of democracy. The discussion also introduces issues of social justice, including the impact of the AIDS pandemic and the migration of Zimbabweans and people from other neighbouring nations into South Africa, touching briefly on xenophobia in recent years;

Communication – considers the dialogue theories and practices, in conjunction with the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, for advancing inter-group contact and development of reconciliation goals and objectives;

Sociology – involves the ongoing social category analysis of the South African people since 1994; the development of a black and Asian middle class, the reconciliation of whiteness in post-apartheid South Africa;

Diversity in higher education – addresses the role of diversity in higher education in the production of a middle class in black, coloured and Asian communities in South Africa: higher education is one of the elements emphasised in the development of a

reconciled South Africa in which the effects of Bantu education are slowly eradicated and replaced by well-educated black, coloured and Asian community members capable of governing with white South Africans;

Geography – focuses on the geo-political matters of land re-assignment in South Africa as a part of the reconciliation efforts and development of the economic stability of the black indigenous people of South Africa; it examines the power of rural governments in the process of land reclamation for black South Africans.

The museum visits, which certified professional guides conduct along with the instructor of record, introduce students to their first glimpse of the various conflicting *goals, beliefs, attitudes, motivations, and emotions* of the people of South Africa. Through multimedia presentations, including artifacts, video, archival television footage and signed agreements between leaders, students experience the direct evidence of the conflicts. Three of the most important museum visits are to the Apartheid Museum, which receives busloads of South African students every day, Robben Island Museum and District Six Museum. Each museum visit is followed by a group discussion at the end of the day on the topic of *Truth telling and its role in impacting members of the greater society in constructing and documenting accurate memories of events for achieving forgiveness and alternative visions for the country*. These discussions and visits are then chronicled and analysed in the students' individual electronic blogs. Each student is then required to read at least two other students' blogs. An analysis of the blogs, using the Mezirow guidelines, is discussed later in this chapter.

All *lectures* are presented over a two- to three-hour span, followed by a class discussion with the instructor of record. *Museum visits* typically span three to four hours, also followed by a class discussion with the instructor of record. Previous experience showed that because American students were generally unfamiliar with the antecedents of race relations in the United States, they were often compelled to develop the academic background at the same time that they were formulating pertinent intellectual queries for the South African lecturer or the museum visits. The course readings provide important background information in this regard, and class discussions allow for greater intellectual growth. Finally, the electronic blogs, of which students are required to write a minimum of three per week, allow students to synthesise the full complement of lectures, class discussions and examination of preserved artifacts. Previous experience has shown that students need time to reflect substantially before committing their ideas to the written form.

In essence, the electronic blogs are equivalent to a minimum of three papers per week and nine for the entire course. In addition, students are required to write more extensive blogs the first week after departing from South Africa, another blog one month after the international travel portion, and the last one before the final paper and presentation are due in early August. These electronic blogs are the key to learning in which ways the course goal/research question has been realised. In addition, the

electronic blogs also assist in determining the peacemaking and Freireian social change elements.

Cross-cultural lessons learned from South Africa's reconciliation and peacemaking

For this study, both Freireian thought and a Mezirow analytical instrument are employed to understand the students' transformative cross-cultural experiences. The Mezirow research strategy provides the analytical tool for categorising the electronic blogs, and the Freireian thought is used to examine the students' cultural changes for understanding reconciliation and peacebuilding in Africa. Two different sets of diversity and reconciliation electronic blogs are used, each set revealing different aspects of the Mezirow research strategy. All of these electronic blogs are publicly available via the web for family, friends, peers and literally the entire world to view. In fact, there were several Facebook requests to join the university course as a result of many students' blogs.

Mezirow identified ten phases of perspective transformation that included the following:

1. A disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame
3. A critical assessment of assumptions
4. Recognition that one's discontent and process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change
5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
6. Planning of a course of action
7. Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
8. Provisionally trying out new roles
9. Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
10. Reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective.

While all of these perspective transformation aspects cannot be entertained in this chapter, a representative corpus of key ideas related to reconciliation and peacemaking are presented. To underscore the *Peace from Within* theme, particular attention is paid to students' processes from their individual perspective to the community and eventually to the African and American context.

In the following entries, the sojourners identify the onset of their perspective shifts: the travellers quickly acknowledge that ‘. . . there [is] already so much to think about’. International Segment - Early Arrival

Some thoughts from South Africa

This will be a place for me to share my questions, ideas, and perhaps digressions sparked by our exploration of Reconciliation and Diversity in South Africa. We’ve just arrived today and there is already so much to think about... (Senior, undergraduate, Philosophy interests)

A sojourn of identity – for South Africa and myself

The course: Reconciliation and Diversity in the 21st Century: The South African Model. The Mission: to learn about the journey South Africa is embarking on to regain its identity and to reconcile the past. It’s more than that, though, as I shall learn throughout my stay. (Junior, undergraduate, International Affairs)

In the entry below, one traveller highlights several of the Mezirow phases, beginning with the disorienting dilemma in which the writer evidences her quest for the type of reconciliation and peacebuilding process witnessed in South Africa.

Post-international

Since I returned home about a week and a half ago, I’ve had many conversations with friends and family curious to learn more. They read my blog while I was away and are very interested in hearing about concepts of reconciliation and justice. Conversations that specifically center on South Africa – reconciliation in South Africa, racial polarization in South Africa, injustice in South Africa, etc. – remain even-keeled, calm, with little anger or real dispute arising. But when I try to make comparisons to the United States, blood begins to boil.

The writer then demonstrates the self-examination, critical assessment of assumptions and the discontentment/shared need for transformation.

Why is it often so hard for us to see what is right in front of our eyes? I suppose that’s an old cliché, usually referring to love between friends or something similarly predictable, but the question keeps coming up for me now that I am home. The racial polarization of the United States is extreme, and although Boulder is severely lacking in diversity the segregation of races here is apparent to anyone who is willing to see it. Nonetheless, I am embarrassed to admit that I never spent much time observing it. In South Africa, though, I was hyper-sensitive to issues of race and constantly noticed the remnants of the long history of racial tension.

Perhaps it is too frightening a burden when one becomes aware of the issues within one's own culture, one's own community, and we want to avoid responsibility. It is so easy to do when one is in the privileged position, reaping the benefits of a society that empowers Whiteness.

The writer then calls upon inner fortitude for exploring new actions and a course of action.

The silence around Whiteness seems almost unbreakable here [in the United States], but this was not the case in South Africa.

... I don't say these things, simple as they are. I need to learn how to speak up, how to say what I'm thinking and engage in dialogue – especially about White privilege. This is the topic about which I have the most difficulty standing up for myself and my ideas, and I don't know quite why this is. Perhaps it is because the idea of White privilege is foreign to many and threatens what is so often taken for granted; I find it very hard to combat this resistance.

The writer then tries on what has been learned in South Africa about dialogue as the means towards reconciliation and peacebuilding, The writer's process then shifts to the means available to the community, reflecting Mezirow's 'new skills acquisition' and 'trying out the new strategy':

When the ANC [African National Congress] won the first democratic election and became the official government of South Africa, the White minority's power was enormously threatened. They wanted to retain power; they certainly did not want the tables to be turned on them, to be subjected to White Area removals and deplorable White education. The tangible threat to their power inspired dialogue. If Afrikaners had to think about White privilege in order to be forgiven, then think about White privilege they would – that would be far better than being held fully accountable and punished for their wrongdoings. In the United States, though, Whites remain the majority.

I find this fascinating: we are not engaged in any sort of pervasive national dialogue about social justice and reconciliation, despite our gruesome history of white supremacy and domination. In South Africa, 'reconciliation' and 'forgiveness' are the words on everyone's lips; here, this has never been the case. We learn about the Civil Rights Movement in middle school, yet in many ways the history of oppression in our country is kept invisible.

The writer then embraces a 'new perspective' for approaching her community. Because the writer's information was given early in the perspective transformation process, information is not available to comment on where the perspective is 'reintegrated' in the writer's life.

We need a sense of communal responsibility, a deeply felt knowledge that we are all connected. We need to widen our conception of 'family', of 'self'. We have to take

responsibility for and invest in the wellbeing of others. Somehow, even with all of our respect for individual rights, we have forgotten what it truly is to respect and value one another. We respect each other's personal space, autonomy, religion, and right to non-interference, but are very lacking in a respect stemming from compassion and a sense of shared humanity.

When I am overwhelmed by deep, peaceful, tender joy, it is identical to feeling in love with the whole world and all people. Such moments are fulfilling and meaningful in a personal way but also motivate outward-turning action. We need to feel, in the depths of our being, the 'mighty responsibility of love' for the whole world.

I don't think the world will ever be free from conflict, from suffering – that doesn't negate the significance of our actions, our personal responsibility, and our own existential challenge of discovering how to live.

Discussion

The critical goal of this study was to examine American students' growth in understanding the relationship among rehumanisation, reconciliation and *ubuntu* for forging a peaceful community. This goal was useful for understanding how to reverse the impact of a dehumanising process in a structurally violent society.

The students' reflections highlight several of Mezirow's phases and address the research question that shaped this work. Most significantly, the critical transformations emerge as Freire's humanisation, rehumanisation as expressed in the African philosophy of *ubuntu* for students travelling to South Africa; this was clear from the students' electronic blogs. The previously presented passages indicated a general transformation perspective shift in the cited students. In fact, all of the students who enrolled in the course evidenced transformative shifts.

First, *ubuntu*. As has been emphasised throughout, *ubuntu* is the key. It was important for the students to learn what *ubuntu* has been and currently is. It is an old African concept that Gade²⁶ traced back to the first written reference to it in 1846. Gade offers the following range of definitions for Ubuntu for different periods:

1. Defined as human quality from 1846 and prior to 1980
2. Connected to or identical to a philosophy or ethic
3. Defined as African humanism since 1975
4. Defined as worldview beginning in the late 1990s
5. Defined by the proverb 'A person is a person through other people' which appeared in 1993-1995.

Fundamentally, the discussion, and more importantly the students' experience with *ubuntu*, provided them with the kind of mind-expanding understanding of the principal

concept that could serve peacemaking and peacebuilding individuals, peacemaking communities and peacemaking societies. For these young adults who live and are immersed in the American culture with its pervasive notion of individualism, it was critical that they learned intellectually and experientially the depth of the *ubuntu* value system. The transformative perspective process began for all of them as they were surrounded by those practising *ubuntu* values. It was also essential to reconcile the concept of *ubuntu* with the widespread perception about the many ‘hotspots’ around the African continent in such places as Somalia, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Western Sahara, to mention only a few.

In order to do so, the students engaged in discussions about the ways in which *ubuntu* was being modernised through the work of van der Walt.²⁷ Borrowing the term Ubuntu-gogy from Bangura,²⁸ van der Walt outlines ways to reconstruct the traditional *ubuntu* structures in the presence of ‘globalized, urbanized, and industrialized circumstances on the African [sub-Saharan] sub-continent’.²⁹ Regardless of the shifting role that *ubuntu* plays in African cultures, South Africa stood out as one country that has transitioned from an armed conflict environment to a peaceful society with enviable success, principally through a sufficient shared sense of *ubuntu* throughout the people and the country.

Brock-Utne³⁰ also traced the origin of *ubuntu*’s relationship to other similar African societal practices and identified the following: *gacaca*, which is practised in Rwanda; *Palaver*, which is found in several African societies, *Mato Oput*, used by the Acholi in Uganda; *Ujamaa*, as practised in Tanzanian culture; and Kujitegemea. This information was important for the students to acknowledge that the concept of peacemaking and peacebuilding is generalised to many African countries and not only South Africa. For further substantiation, students learned from Huyse and Salter’s³¹ edited volume, ‘Traditional justice and reconciliation after violent conflict: Learning from African experiences’, about the triad of ‘peacemaking, traditional justice and reconciliation’ as traditional African practices.³² In essence, the course created an understanding of culturally different practices for the people of many African nations.

Absolutely critical to the students’ international experience was to offer them an alternative to dehumanising retributive practices that are widely used in the United States of America. Specifically, the students investigated the difference between sympathy and empathy for interpersonal change. As Halpern and Weinstein³³ noted about the distinction between sympathy and empathy:

The major function of empathy is to individualize and particularize and thereby to challenge the major aspects of dehumanization. First, empathy differs from sympathy in that it entails seeking the individual perspective of another rather than generalizing or stereotyping . . . Second, empathy involves being genuinely curious about another person. Third, empathy involves emotional as well as cognitive openness, and tolerating the ambivalence this might arouse.

. . . [C]oexistence without empathy is both superficial and fragile. Just below the surface [are] mistrust, resentment, and even hatred.

As the students' blogs indicated, they too began to realise that empathy, as described by Halpern and Weinstein, not sympathy, served the South African people in their strong embrace of peacemaking and peacebuilding. Interestingly, the students themselves also began to show signs of 'true' empathy – a peace from within effect, suggesting that their travels to South Africa and interacting and living in the country affected their investment in peacemaking and peacebuilding.

Conclusion

In essence, this chapter pursued understanding of a process for developing peacemaking and peacebuilding with young individuals who hail from an individualistic and retributive justice cultural context. A fundamental outcome of this inquiry is that indeed humanising and rehumanising transformative practices can result from experiences when placed directly in another culture and context for a short period of time. In addition, the *ubuntu* value system is one that can be learned and ultimately internalised both cognitively and emotionally by those who are unfamiliar with its precepts. Given this, Ubuntu-gogy throughout African education seems imperative. Granted, the transformative perspective calls for the involvement of young adults, but students living in a multi-generational African community would seem to have a greater chance of having the value system reinforced on a moment-to-moment basis.

Policy recommendations

1. Develop centres for transformative peacemaking and peacebuilding throughout communities.
2. Create community sites for the art of praxis that would be structured along a practice-to-theory-to-practice model.
3. Sponsor funding opportunities for academics and community-based partnerships for routine practices for learning rehumanisation based on the Halpern and Weinstein-like concepts in African traditions.
4. Re-invest in curriculum development for school-aged children to learn the ubuntu value system based on van der Walt's Ubuntu-gogy.

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Social media and civil society in the Tunisian revolution: implications for democracy and peacebuilding

Stephen Juan King

Introduction

This chapter examines the role that Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, TUNeZine and other social media have played in the Tunisian revolution. The author argues that civil-society-building – in the Tunisian case transferred from the cyber public sphere to the traditional public sphere – plays an important role in post-conflict peacebuilding and the chances of lasting democracy.

From a community-based peacebuilding perspective, it is particularly important to understand how social media can bring about change. This chapter explains how social media helps to mobilise individuals, families and communities. It shows how cyber communities can make democratisation more accessible as a grassroots effort. Since peacebuilding relates to democratisation, it is also important for those in the peacebuilding field to learn more about the cyber public sphere's role in the Tunisian revolution.

Studies of democratic transitions and consolidation treat the association between war and democracy as broadly positive.¹ Even the fear of war in violent, conflict-ridden societies is associated with democracy.² Scholars remind us that war or conquest played an integral part in the historical emergence or re-emergence of many democracies.³ The American Revolution was a democratic revolution. Conquest by democratic powers allowed for the dismantling of problematic military and political institutions in Germany and Japan.⁴ Military defeats in the Soviet Union (Afghanistan), Argentina, and Greece contributed to the breakdown of their authoritarian regimes during 'the third wave' of democracy (1974-1989).⁵ Internal wars in South Africa, Mexico and the Philippines were followed by the formation of democracies.⁶ Violent conflict and struggle led to stalemates and democratic compromises to avoid further bloodshed in Sweden at the turn of the twentieth century and Turkey at the end of World War II.⁷

While scholars note the strong association between war or violent social conflict and democracy, the links are underspecified.⁸ The best insights from the literature suggest that certain conditions have to be met in order for war and social conflict to foster democratic politics.⁹ Reuschmeyer, Stephens and Stephens argue that war will only foster democracy if subordinated classes have or can develop strong organisations to push for more participation.¹⁰ Linz and Stepan underscore how the consequences of war are shaped by the nature of civil and political society.¹¹

War or violent social conflicts that lead to the breakdown of authoritarian regimes are more likely to foster democratic outcomes if civil and political society is available and demands an electoral path. Civil society can be defined as the free space in which democratic attitudes and behaviour are cultivated.¹² This chapter argues that social media in Tunisia fostered the growth of a civil society that is fuelling Tunisia's democratic transition.

The chapter begins with a description of a closed political society under former President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali. The use of social media is then discussed as an alternative route to develop civil society in a country where the state repressed any serious efforts by its citizens to discuss and participate in politics. The civil society that emerged online under Ben Ali was able to maintain the momentum on the ground of a popular revolt that ended a long-standing dictatorship and started the Arab Spring.

This vibrant civil society will also help to maintain peace, as the political formations taking shape in a more democratic Tunisia reveal potentially violent social conflicts over the role of religion in public affairs and the state. The Islamist political party, al-Nahda, was the biggest winner in Tunisia's constituent assembly elections of October 2011. The constituent assembly is charged with writing Tunisia's next constitution. However, al-Nahda did not win an outright majority of the votes and has formed a governing coalition with two small secular political parties. This shift toward the centre has invigorated a more radical Islamist political movement with a weaker commitment to democracy and civil rights. Tunisia's civil society will be counted upon to weaken the political appeal of radical Islamist politics. By way of conclusion of this chapter, the author discusses the implications of the Tunisian case for debates about the role of social media in authoritarian breakdown.

Ben Ali's police state

A former head of national security at the Ministry of Interior, Tunisian President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali (1987-2011), created one of the most repressive police states in North Africa. The state party that he reorganised, the Constitutional Democratic Rally (RCD), won every election with more than 90 per cent of the vote total. He won farcical presidential elections with an even higher percentage of the vote total. Freedom House, a US-based non-governmental organisation (NGO) that promotes free institutions worldwide, characterised Tunisia as 'unfree' for every year that Ben Ali was in power.

The shut-down of political space by Ben Ali followed early promises that he would guide Tunisia to democracy after he took power in a bloodless coup in 1987. In his first two years in power Ben Ali organised multiparty elections, orchestrated a national pact, granted amnesty to political prisoners, closed the state security court, adopted a liberal press code and granted amnesty to hundreds of political prisoners. After that start, however, in the following more than two decades in power, his regime repressed virtually all of civil society.¹³

The ratcheting up of state repression began with fears of an Islamist political party, al-Nahda, which performed surprisingly well in the country's first multiparty elections under Ben Ali in 1989, causing the regime to adjust vote results. Frustrated by the regime's refusal to keep its political promises to them – al-Nahda leaders had signed Ben Ali's national pact – Islamists led demonstrations in the street. The demonstrations were met with the increasing use of state coercive force. Isolated incidents of violence by the more militant wing of al-Nahda led to a military confrontation that resulted in the emasculation of the Islamist movement in 1991-1992. Their leader, Rachid Ghannouchi, fled to London.

Ben Ali built a regime committed to social control. All civil society associations had to gain approval from the Ministry of the Interior, which they were granted or not granted according to regime interests. Associations were also controlled financially through state subsidies based on political subservience. State party loyalists also infiltrated new associations or duplicated them by forming ones of their own. The regime was moreover not reluctant to use force against civil society organisations. Islamists, trade unionists, students, journalists, left-wing groups and anyone else suspected of active opposition to the regime faced harassment, arrest and torture.

Similarly, Tunisia's press under Ben Ali became one of the most state-controlled assets in the Arab world, a region known for state censorship. The French organisation, Reporters without Borders (RSF), described press freedoms under Ben Ali as non-existent, stating that 'news management [was] a fundamental building block of the police state in Tunisia'. In 2010, RSF ranked Tunisia 164th out of 178 countries in its press freedom index. The organisation provided a chilling view of Tunisia's political climate under Ben Ali: 'All the institutions that could constitute countervailing powers to the regime – the judiciary, parliament, voluntary associations, political parties, universities, and so forth, have been systematically placed under government control.'¹⁴

Under Ben Ali, Tunisia had one of the most comprehensive filtering, monitoring, and internet censorship systems in the world. In 2009, Freedom House ranked Tunisia below China and Iran on measures of internet freedom. Under Ben Ali's rule, Tunisians commonly said that there was a police agent in every family. The regime attempted to suffocate civil and political society completely.

A cyber civil society

Ben Ali's regime utilised every tool in the police-state tool-kit to prevent the type of country-wide information flow and civil society strength that contributed to its ouster in early 2011. However, despite regime efforts, social media made a powerful contribution to the Tunisian revolution by constructing a parallel cyber civil society out of the reach, and to an extent the understanding, of the regime.

The process that led to the successful circumvention of a police state at the end of 2010 can be traced back to 1998 when two Tunisians known as 'Foetus' and 'Waterman' (names used to guard their anonymity) began what they called a cyber think tank and

named it Takriz (Arabic street slang for frustrated anger).¹⁵ Takriz's goals included freedom of speech and affordable internet access. Foetus, Takriz's chief technology officer, is a skilled hacker who began hacking because he could not afford Tunisia's then exorbitant phone and internet costs.¹⁶ The founders recognised that the internet was the only form of media in Tunisia not completely controlled by Ben Ali. The internet also provided relative safety for dissidents through anonymity.

By 2000 Takriz had grown to a loose network of thousands and their criticisms of the Tunisian regime, including critiques of its most powerful actors, led to their website being blocked in 2000. Takriz used various tactics, ranging from serious political analysis to leaked documents and fierce polemic, to reach multiple audiences.¹⁷ Its leaders turned to Arabic slang, obscenities and street culture to stir up street youth.¹⁸ They also organised protests at football stadiums, one of the few arenas with lax political control. Its members were hunted and exiled for years under Ben Ali. Their cyber activism increased dramatically after 2009 when Ben Ali orchestrated yet another five-year term in office. Takriz's founders saw this as the last straw, as they could imagine another decade of Ben Ali and his rapacious mafia looming, with the formal opposition and general public afraid to act.¹⁹

Zouhair Yahyaoui, one of the members of Takriz, deserves special note. Yahyaoui, known online as 'Ettounsi' (the Tunisian), started TUNeZine, a political webzine and forum that inspired many with humour, such as the following:

TUNeZine is launching a competition for jokes, reserved for young people, about Ben Ali and his party.

First prize: 13 years in prison

Second prize: 20 years in prison

Third prize: 26 years in prison²⁰

TUNeZine made 'Ettounsi' famous in Tunisia, but also led to his arrest and torture. He was jailed in 2000 after inviting readers to vote on whether Tunisia was 'a republic, a kingdom, a zoo, or a prison'.²¹ According to his family he was sent to one of the worst prisons in the country – with 120 people in one room, just one bathroom, and hardly any water.²² He became ill and was beaten when he asked for a doctor. He went on several hunger strikes.²³ Reporters without Borders gave Zouhair Yahyaoui its first Cyber-Freedom Prize in 2003. The Pen American Center gave him its Freedom to Write Award that same year. He was released that year in extremely poor physical condition and died shortly afterward.

The life of Zouhair Yahyaoui was the primary catalyst for the emergence of Nawaat (Arabic for the nucleus or core) in 2004. Its four founders were affected by Yahyaoui's articles and committed to his tradition of cyber activism. Nawaat began as a webzine and Nawaat forums. Later it became a collection of bloggers.²⁴ In time members of Nawaat became adept at all the social media tools: blogs, forums, Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, and various live streaming applications. They learned quickly, for example,

that Facebook provided an empty space to fill with information in a superior manner to older platforms, such as WebZine where all users read the comments of one editor. They understood that the power of Facebook and some blogs was in the interaction between writers and readers. Along with blogs and Twitter, Nawaat used Facebook to create a cyber civil society: activist platforms, with followers, citizen journalism, and social interaction that could partially replace the civil society confiscated by Ben Ali's regime. The social media platforms provided a public space, and from 2007 to 2010 there was an explosion in the number of Tunisians regularly using social media, which provided the public for this new public space.

Ironically, Ben Ali, himself a computer geek who was an electronics technician in the army, may have contributed to the creation of this dissident public sphere. In his 15th development plan in 2001 he announced a policy of extending internet connection to 100 per cent of the country. Under his rule the number of cyber cafes increased dramatically in response to government credits and grants to the unemployed that funded these ventures. The Tunisian version of the internet becoming available to many Tunisians was heavily censored, but Ben Ali's technology push did get large numbers of Tunisians online. In addition, his daughter, Cyrine Ben Ali Mabrouk, brought third generation (3G) developments in wireless technology, especially mobile communications or 3G mobile internet services, to Tunisia through the company Orange in 2010. 3G technology vastly improved live-streaming capabilities in Tunisia.

Technology to evade internet censorship rapidly became widespread in Tunisia. Hot spotting technology spread to the masses and when the regime broke down in 2011 thousands posted on their Facebook page, 'hot spotting we won't forget you.' Well-trained cyber activists associated with Nawaat were technically able to avoid detection by the secret police, for the most part utilising virtual personal navigators (VPN). The bloggers used the news feed function on Facebook to share information and develop and maintain thousands – if not tens of thousands of followers. These bloggers frequently adopted a revolutionary tone towards the Ben Ali regime. Among the most prominent were Fatima Arabica, Slim Amamou, Yassine Ayari, Malek Kadhraoui and Riadh Guerfali.²⁵

The online and offline strategies and tactics of cyber activists that began in 1998 with Takriz were able to play an important role in ensuring the end of a dictatorship. Between 1998 and the 2010-2011 Tunisian revolution, social media tools were used in a manner that gradually created an alternative public sphere, a civil society online, in a country that did not allow street demonstrations, associational life, free speech or independent political parties. This civil society had become committed to political power based on free and fair multiparty elections.

Authoritarian breakdown

On 17 December 2010 a fruit vendor in Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia, Mohamed Bouazizi, set himself on fire to protest against the confiscation of his goods and his constant

harassment by municipal officials and police officers. As a symbol of exasperation with arbitrary rule, Bouazizi's actions led to immediate protests, beginning first with members of his extended family or 'tribe,' or with his fellow fruit vendors.²⁶ A second suicide occurred in Sidi Bouzid a few days later when another young man electrocuted himself on a utility pole. His mother wailed and cried in the streets for hours and this generated community protests. The demonstrations spread to neighbouring towns quickly. In the end, the spontaneous anger of the Tunisian people towards Ben Ali's autocratic regime had enough fuel to engulf the country and end his dictatorship on 14 January 2011, when he fled the country for Saudi Arabia.

However, this was not the first time that a serious revolt had erupted in the southern or central zones of Tunisia, regions characterised by greater poverty and inequality than the wealthier coastal zones of the north. In fact, this was a geographical pattern, with revolts often starting in the south, which had the potential to engulf the country, if information about them had not been halted by the regime. In 2008, for example, revolts began in southern mining towns near the Sahara. The protests focused on corruption and working conditions. Six months of sporadic demonstrations led to hundreds of arrests and one death and many injuries at the hands of security forces. However, the Tunisian government imposed a successful information blackout during this revolt. Journalists were not allowed in the region, the state-controlled media ignored it and little information and few images to inspire similar protests filtered out.

Why was the Tunisian government able to black out information about threatening revolts in 2008, but unable to do so in 2010? This was due to a gradual process that began around 1998 that prepared a cyber terrain that by 2010 was capable of circumventing one of the fiercest police states in the world. The most dramatic change between 2008 and 2010 was in the number of Facebook users, which increased from around 25 000 in 2008 to over 2 million in 2010 (in a country of 11 million people). This gave long-time cyber activists the audience to maintain the revolts' momentum in 2010. On one of the first videos of the protests from Sidi Bouzid in December 2010, one can hear someone saying, 'I'm going to post this on Facebook tonight.'²⁷ Between 17 December 2010 and 14 January over 500 videos of Tunisian protests were posted on Facebook. Blogs, Twitter and You Tube also played a role. Because of social media, social interaction across the country had become too supple for the Tunisian police state. 'Like, Comment, Share, Tweet' became tools adapted to Tunisian circumstances, circumstances characterised by anger and a powerful desire to end an unpopular dictatorship.

During the revolutionary period from 17 December 2010 to 14 January 2011, demonstrations were organised through Facebook. Anonymous bloggers organised the 25 December demonstration in Tunis. A member of Nawaat, Slim Amamou, filmed this protest, which was broadcast by Al Jazeera. This was the first time that people from Sidi Bouzid realised that their protests had reached Tunis, the capital. In early January 2011, a group of cyber activists called 'Anonymous' hacked official government websites,

including those of the President and Prime Minister, to demonstrate the vulnerability of the regime. Unlike in 2008, there would be no media blackout of these protests spreading from the south of Tunisia to the coastal regions in the north. Cyber activists began to say among themselves that ‘the cops rule the streets, but we rule the internet.’

The Ben Ali regime made a last-ditch effort to stop cyber activism, but they were largely unsuccessful, with protestors mocking their efforts with slogans such as, ‘Free from 404’ [internet language for file not found].²⁸ Bloggers posted videos of events in Sidi Bouzid as they occurred: violent images of state murder, the photos of martyrs, and the executions by Ben Ali’s thugs. They provided the names of arrested militants.

Despite the banning of YouTube, videos of demonstrations appeared on YouTube. #Sidibouzid was the hashtag, a # used to mark keywords or topics in a Tweet hashtag.²⁹ Activists filmed confrontations between protestors and Tunisian riot police all over the country and successfully posted them online and/or had them broadcast on Al Jazeera. By the time that mass demonstrations were taking place in the major Tunisian cities in early 2011, few Tunisians were unaware of the events, and many were participating in them.

Since the authoritarian breakdown, cyber activists in Tunisia have been given their due for their role in escalating demonstrations that brought down a dictator. Nawaat was a co-winner of the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) award in 2011. The EFF Pioneer Award is an annual prize for people who have made significant contributions to the empowerment of individuals in using computers. Co-founder of Nawaat, Riadh Guerfali, or ‘Astrubal’, his online identity, won the RSF Net Citizen award in 2011. RSF Secretary-General Jean-Francois Julliard said at the award ceremony, ‘Today no media can ignore the information sources that are network social sites for sharing media. Sometimes they are the only sources of information we have.’³⁰

Finally, on 13 January 2011, the day before his departure, Ben Ali gave his, ‘I have understood you’ speech in which he said in the Tunisian dialect of Arabic, ‘Yes, I’m speaking to you all, in Tunisia and abroad, in the language of everyone, so that everyone understands. I’m speaking to you because the situation needs radical change. I have understood your message, I understand the unemployed, the needy, the politicians, all those demanding more freedom, I have understood everyone ...’. Without a cyber public sphere, however, this last official address by Tunisian President Zine el-Abidine Ali may never have taken place. The regime would probably have been able to confine the protests and information about them to the impoverished southern zones of the country. The public would have lacked the avenues and perhaps the courage to speak its mind. From December 2010 to January 2011 most Tunisian Facebook users (over 2 million of them by then), changed their profile pictures to the Tunisian flag, except that the flag was grey or black instead of red. The red Tunisian flag represented Ben Ali and his RCD political party. Tunisians were only proud of their flags during soccer matches. When users modified the flag on their Facebook profiles, it was a powerful act of defiance and resistance to tyranny. By early January 2011, Tunisians had begun acting in the streets with the same freedom and courage used on the web.

The role of social media in the breakdown of authoritarian regimes

In the Tunisian case, social media played a profound role in breaking down a closed authoritarian regime. It removed barriers to collective action and broke down authoritarian monopolies on communication and information. Social media tools were used in a manner that created a cyber public sphere, a civil society online, in a country that did not allow street demonstrations, associational life, free speech or independent political parties. Online citizenship became a guiding principle. Tunisians using social media increasingly demanded their right to be treated by fellow human beings as equal with respect to the making of collective choices and increasingly insisted on the obligation of those implementing such choices to be held accountable and accessible to all members of the polity.³¹ Once the numbers of Tunisians using the internet and social media grew to a substantial part of the population, a powerful police state was unable to shut it down (thereby keeping local conflicts local). Nor was it able to conquer a mass uprising of Tunisians, in the streets this time instead of online, unwilling to accept anything less than democracy and full citizenship rights.

The importance of social media in Tunisia's revolution gives empirical support to advocates of the view that the internet in general and social media in particular can contribute to processes of democratisation. Clay Shirky³² argues that social media – broadly defined to include Facebook, Twitter, mobile phones, blogs, and other internet platforms – have the capacity to coordinate loosely aligned publics and solve collective action problems in a way that is truly transformational. He sees authoritarian states as having a real, but limited, capacity to control these spheres of communication and coordination. Even when dictatorships shut down their communication grids to deny the ability to coordinate in real time and broadcast documentation of an event, their actions often have the opposite effect of alerting the population at large that a threat to the regime – in the regime's perception – is being posed somewhere in the country. Authoritarian regimes also create economic problems for their countries on a practical level when they shut down significant portions of their telecommunications infrastructure, including the use of mobile phones.

Fabien Granjon asserted that in many authoritarian countries that shut down political space – China, Burma, Iran, Tunisia and Egypt, among others – mobilisations online became the main way of expressing dissent and protest. Tools such as Facebook and Twitter allow isolated individuals the potential to evade social controls and censorship in order to circulate information and become political entrepreneurs with large followings.³³

Discussing Cuba, Bert Hoffman argued that web technology can create a new public sphere in which autonomous citizen action is possible in an authoritarian context, but the effect of this sphere on democratisation depends on linking online debate to offline social action. He paid particular attention to the transnational capacity of the internet, its ability to connect dissidents at home with a global network of sympathisers.³⁴ Babak Rahimi argues that the internet has played an important role in the ongoing

struggle for democracy in Iran. He asserts that the internet has opened a new virtual space for political dissent, because ultimately it defies control and supervision of speech in authoritarian regimes.³⁵

Summarising reasons for optimism concerning the democratising potential of the internet and social media, Taylor Boas and Shanthi Kalathil argue that the internet can be a powerful tool to organise dissent, connect dissidents with diasporas abroad, break down authoritarian monopolies of information and aid in the development of civil society.³⁶ Similarly, detailing the optimistic strand of the literature, Severine Arsene discusses cyber activists that brave censorship and force authorities to moderate repressive politics. Bit by bit they nibble away at the rigidity of authoritarian regimes, thereby constituting the premises of a progressive but inexorable transformation of the political system.³⁷

Analysts, including some mentioned above, also find reasons to be pessimistic about the democratising potential of the internet and social media. Evgeny Morozov criticises a culture of naively optimistic, utopian ‘internet intellectuals’.³⁸ In his view, internet-driven explanations tend to drive out other, often more important explanations for dissidence, collective action, and political mobilisation in authoritarian regimes. He also notes that the internet has become a tool of oppression as much as liberation, allowing regimes to identify and repress dissidents and monitor and control opposition activities. He refers to a ‘digital Orientalism’, in which the internet is viewed as a purely benevolent source of political change in authoritarian societies, but a potential danger in Western, democratic ones.³⁹ Severine Arsene, in an overview of studies about the internet and politics, reads the literature as highlighting the weaknesses of online dissent rather than its democratising potential.⁴⁰

The pessimists caution that the internet and social media are not panaceas that can foster anti-authoritarian mobilisation easily, or even frequently. They view the internet and social media services as commercially driven and thus unlikely to provide avenues for consistent subversion of the status quo, of which they are a part. In China, the government not only continually demonstrates its capacity to control and shut down social media coordination and communication, it also uses arguments about nationalism and public morals to encourage operators of Chinese web services to censor their users and to encourage users to censor themselves.⁴¹ They note that the internet alone is insufficient to challenge authoritarian rule and that its penetration in most developing countries remains limited.

The evidence from the Tunisian case validates an authoritarian government’s attempted use of the internet as a tool to identify, monitor and control dissidents and opposition activities. However, its efforts were far weaker than the opposition’s use of social media platforms to inform the public in a closed authoritarian regime characterised by police state tactics. The internet and social media created an important alternative public sphere and during the 2010/11 nation-wide popular demonstrations in Tunisia that brought down an authoritarian regime, they were crucial elements

of coordination and mobilisation that overwhelmed any regime efforts to use social media as a tool of repression. It can certainly be noted that internet and social media penetration in Tunisia was probably higher in 2010 than in most developing countries, but the threshold level requires further study.

Finally, it would be foolhardy to argue that social media drove the Tunisian revolution. Socio-economic and political conditions, along with one courageous martyr, ignited the revolt. Still, during those frantic four weeks from the time that Mohammed Bouazizi set himself on fire to Ben Ali's flight from the country on 14 January 2011, one can be sure that former Tunisian President Ben Ali wished that social media and the more politically demanding citizens that it helped produce did not exist at all.

Social media and the aftermath of the breakdown of authoritarian regimes

The events that took place in Tunisia offer insights into the role of internet technology in a social revolution; the cyber world is a relatively new dimension for social movements across the world. Though social media have incredible potential, they are not a panacea. In addition, change does not come immediately. For longer-term change to occur, there must also be structural changes. Scholars of democracy, after a period in which structural conditions were downplayed as important factors in democratic transitions, are once again emphasising the importance of socio-economic conditions – combined with actor choices – as explanations for when democracies emerge and their chances of consolidation. These socio-economic prerequisites for democracy typically include broadly shared economic growth, a substantial middle class and high levels of literacy and urbanisation. Access to the internet and social or new media could be added to this list as well.

Political and civil society (cyber and traditional) are already facing challenges in Tunisia's transition. The electorate is divided between Islamic and secular political parties. The country's founding election led to al-Nahda, Tunisia's main Islamist movement and political party, winning nearly 40 per cent of the vote, much more than any other party. The electoral strength of Islamists has led to attempts by the secular opposition to form coalitions capable of challenging them in future elections. Al-Nahda, not wanting to divide Tunisia into Islamists and non-Islamists, has chosen to govern in a coalition with two secular political parties. It is also taking an active role in trying to encourage smaller and more radical Islamist groups to eschew violence and attempt to attain their aims through the democratic electoral process. These manifestations of a healthy civil society in Tunisia will help gird it for the bumps ahead.

Policy recommendations

1. The case of Tunisia in 2011 provides insight into the role that the internet can play in a social revolution; this is an important case study for other social movements, since social media tools are relatively new. In particular, the Tunisian case points to social media as a tool to build civil society.

2. Democratisation was one of the ultimate outcomes of the cyber revolution in Tunisia. As far as democratisation is linked to peacebuilding, the cyber revolution may have implications for conflict resolution/transformation more broadly.
3. It is possible that cyber communities can make democratisation more accessible as a grassroots effort, but one lesson from studying social media is that its outcomes are not always easily predictable.
4. Social media such as WebZine helped mobilise Tunisian individuals (such as 'Ettounsi') and even communities. Also, two Tunisians known as 'Foetus' and 'Waterman' (names used to guard their anonymity) began what they called a cyber think tank called Takriz (Arabic street slang for frustrated anger). Takriz's goals included freedom of speech and affordable internet access. Social media can lead to a breakdown of authoritarian regimes, but they do not necessarily protect activists who hope to remain anonymous (for example, 'Ettounsi' was beaten and tortured and he ultimately died).
5. Despite the positive outcomes, it is also important to remember that the internet is not a panacea. It has become a tool of oppression as much as liberation, allowing regimes such as the one in Tunisia to identify and repress dissidents and monitor and control opposition activities.

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- 24 Much of the following comes from an interview with an early member of Nawaat.
- 25 Fatima Arabica's blog was mainly literary; however, she was arrested in 2009, possibly to send a message to other bloggers.
- 26 Citizens in Sidi Bouzid, interviewed by the author in April 2012, offered both accounts.
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Conclusion – peace from within

Sylvester B. Maphosa, Laura DeLuca and Alphonse Keasley

Our purpose in embarking on this project was to profile grassroots peacemaking and peacebuilding ventures that were making a difference on the African continent. We chose to structure the work around the concept of *Peace from Within* because it responded well to Boutros-Ghali and Brahimi's ideas that conflicts were becoming ever more intrastate rather than interstate. Consequently, it was essential that local actors and multidimensional processes assume a greater role in peacemaking and peacebuilding. Acknowledging that building a culture of peace is arduous, reiterative and marathon-like in its progression, we have featured a variety of approaches and practices that are being used around Africa. The approaches include: 1) multi-levelled capacity-building for peace; 2) individual growth and re-integration of disenfranchised community members, as with former child-soldiers and former prisoners; 3) incorporating and substantiating *ubuntu* values systems, as with women in the military, post-election violence and resolution of community disputes in pastoral communities, as well as students learning about *ubuntu*; 4) building local, sustainable cultures of peace, as when expressing one's self through praxis (community reflection and purposeful action) and voting; and 5) maintaining and strengthening community through scalable development.

Furthermore, it has been the aim of this volume on community-based peacebuilding in Africa to promote greater interaction among policymakers, research scholars and community practitioners. Through this volume, a refreshing and encouraging fact has surfaced: the scholar-practitioners and local community workers are indeed toiling individually on various African communities toward peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts. Individually, each scholar-practitioner and community worker has recognised the value of grassroots dedication for peacemaking and peacebuilding and, in some way, each of their chapters reveals the strength of their individual determination. This determination subtly reveals their individual 'peace from within' that has motivated them to work in community with others. To deduce that there are many other scholar-practitioners who are also giving of themselves to their communities to create small-scale positive peace is a tenable conjecture. As stated in the introduction to this book on peacebuilding in Africa, the United Nations' seminal documents that called for local actors to undertake the often unheralded work of peacemaking and peacebuilding are assuming their proper place; this volume documents the work of a select group of these local actors and also analyses system-wide efforts to promote peace, as well as the

relationship between indigenous/local mechanisms for peacebuilding and their relation with modern African nation states.

As noted earlier, several African countries – Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, Kenya, South Sudan, Tunisia and Tanzania – are fraught with national level or local level and even intrastate conflict, some flashpoints intractably stubborn. However, in many of these same countries, local actors are engaged in indigenous peacemaking and peacebuilding practices. Our goal has been to showcase these local peacemaking and peacebuilding practices that demonstrate the *Peace from within* concept.

Tony Karbo, in his chapter on ‘Capacity building for sustainable peacebuilding in Africa’, highlights the importance African governments have placed on African educational institutions to ‘respond to the increasing numbers of violent conflicts, the job market and the changing nature of the global economy, which has increasingly become knowledge-based’. Knowledge is recognised as both a resource and a source of power in both local and global relations. Karbo argues that the need for capacity in post-conflict societies is acute and the greatest challenge for developmental peacebuilding. Considering that Africa has recently concluded its first ever capacity-development decade, much needs to be done in this area, particularly in post-conflict contexts. The diversity of capacity-building interventions for peacebuilding from within reflects the myriad contexts in which capacity-building takes place. Thus, capacity development and capacity-building are as relevant in government institutions as they are in rural communities. Local community groups have the relevant capacities, especially in peacebuilding, to sustain reconciliation programmes. What is often needed and might be missing could simply be the management structures and access to information and technology essential for sustainable capacity-building.

John Paul and Angela Lederach provide an overview of the field of peacebuilding with specific focus on community-based peacebuilding efforts in Africa. They begin with a review of both the conceptual and practical evolution of the field of peace studies, drawing on case studies from Somalia and Liberia. The Lederachs note that the academic study of peacebuilding has emerged only in the past few decades; the practice of community-based response to conflict is an ancient one. Seeking to restore relationships and cultivate peace in the midst and aftermath of violent conflict, peacebuilding offers an overarching concept that can encompass conflict transformation, truth-telling, reconciliation, trauma healing, economic development, environmental justice, gender justice and restorative justice. The authors draw on three distinct case studies to highlight the significant contributions community-based peacebuilding in Africa has made to the wider field. The Lederachs’ first case study focuses on the Somali wandering elders; nomadic by background, the three elders formed an *ergada*, a travelling group of elders that would venture out to meet other warring sub-clan elders in an effort to persuade them to participate in a *guurti*, a gathering of elders, poets, spokespersons and chosen representatives of the various sub-clans. They organised a reconciliation process based on the concept of *nabad raadin*, or ‘let us talk’. The second case study focusses on the

tree of frustration, a place where Liberian ex-combatants met with village mothers who eventually gave them food and cut their hair, thus beginning a process of reintegration and reconciliation in the aftermath of the civil war. The Lederachs' third case study focusses on the Liberian Women's Mass Action for Peace, a group that mobilised grassroots action, forcing the male warlords to reach a peace agreement and using their networking power to elect Africa's first female president – Ellen Sirleaf Johnson.

Pamela Machakanja argues that former child soldiers in South Sudan who have not enjoyed holistic peace education and socio-economic integration will find themselves re-engaging in violent practices for basic survival. Successful peacemaking efforts with former child soldiers require greater local commitment to restore them as productive members of the community.

In her chapter, 'Healing and integrated development as part of peacebuilding in post-conflict areas: A social capital lens,' Yvonne Sliep presents a social capital theoretical framework for helping whole communities in Burundi to move toward greater trust and community expression. Using narrative theatre methodology, she provides a concrete approach for attending to the local context and involving the community in successful peacemaking interventions. Sliep argues that we need to pay closer attention to healing and integral development as part of community-based peacebuilding. She suggests that there is a greater chance for this strategy to be successful in a post-conflict situation where there is a reduction of violence and people are more likely to be able to take control of their lives.

According to Sliep's analysis, peacebuilding is about relationships. Understanding that our ideas and reality are negotiated through dialogue, also through theory, will enhance openness. If there is any chance of persuading already overburdened practitioners to consider the usefulness of theory, it is going to have to be based on strong logic and rationale. There are no shortcuts in this; investment must be made to create the possibility of dialogue on ground level. This dialogue must involve as many voices as possible and be taken seriously by other stakeholders. Dialogue has to be embedded in respect and followed through with visible accountability.

Social capital is proposed as framework that can eventually bring greater synergy to top-down and bottom-up approaches, as the point of entry can be anywhere in the framework. The strategy uses the stories of problems experienced by people in the community as an entry point rather than highlighting the drivers of the conflict, although these are not ignored. Whatever lens is used to understand dynamics and elements on different levels will also lead to the possibility of creating better-tailored evaluation strategies that are discussed later in the chapter. The focus is on exploring how social capital can contribute to peacebuilding. Sliep applies the social capital frame to Burundi, which emerged from a 12-year, ethnic-based civil war in 2012. Hutu-Tutsi violence led to more than 300 000 people, mostly civilians, being killed in the war.

In his chapter, 'The politics of alternative justice in post-genocide Rwanda: Assessing the *gacaca* community justice system', Nicasius Achu focuses on the *gacaca* system of

community justice inspired by tradition in Rwanda. The *gacaca* grassroots tribunals tried some two million people accused of taking part in the 1994 genocide, earning praise for ethnic reconciliation from some and criticism from others. Achu presents the case for removing political elites from the process and returning it to a community-based practice for addressing major violent atrocities, such as the 1994 Rwandan genocide. He highlights several positive aspects of *gacaca*, including community participation, African collective solidarity and communality as a problem-solving mechanism, the desire for African solutions for African problems and the importance of talking and being heard and telling one's story as part of a peace and reconciliation process that draws on an age-old Rwandan tradition of conflict resolution. *Gacaca* gave genocide victims the chance to speak out publicly in a state-sponsored forum about the atrocities committed during the 1994 genocide. Despite its strengths, Achu argues that *gacaca* had several failures as a restorative justice mechanism. For example, restorative justice favours the voluntary character of the process, but *gacaca* compelled all Hutu to appear before the *gacaca* judges. Through this chapter we learn that indigenous peacebuilding mechanisms such as *gacaca* have much to offer, but that it can be complex to scale up a model such as *gacaca* and that incorporating traditional peacemaking practices in the context of a modern state requires effort. According to Achu, the Ministry of Justice in Rwanda should institute legislation that will allow conventional courts to review serious cases of injustices alleged to have occurred during the *gacaca* hearings and government should verify that no person has been prosecuted twice for the same offence and ensure that action is taken against persons who falsely accuse others.

According to Martha Mutisi, in 'Addressing ethno-political conflicts through the concept of *Abanyarwanda*: A case of "ethnic amnesia" in Rwanda', the concept of *Abanyarwanda* is definitely an innovative strategy towards uniting a nation scarred by its violent past; there is a lot more than can be done to evoke reconciliation and national unity in Rwanda. *Abanyarwanda*, both in rhetoric and in practice, has substantially managed to rally Rwandans around the calls for a united nation that is ready to confront the future. If the face of Kigali and the rate of economic growth are to be used as indicators of a nation that is forging ahead, then it would be easy to conclude that *Abanyarwanda* is succeeding in harnessing the positive energies of Rwandans. However, contemporary Rwanda is still a traumatised society and notions of oneness have not successfully addressed the still existing yet very much camouflaged divisions between ethnic groups, between returnees and those who stayed and faced the wrath of genocide and between the rich and the poor. Mutisi asserts that to transcend these divisions, Rwandan society needs to go beyond mystical calls of a united nation towards implementing integrative strategies of development, promote democratic and free politics and allow people to discuss ethnicity in a safe and open manner.

Mara Goldman and Makko Sinandei illustrated the opportunities that exist in recognising, supporting and building on customary institutions for peacebuilding within and across communities. This is not a romantic call to return to the past, to

support some unchanged ‘traditions’ or undemocratic ‘chiefs’. Customary institutions have changed over time and will continue to change, and in some ways need to change to be more representative of communities (i.e. gender equality), and to engage peace from within on a larger scale (i.e. across different ethnic groups). The Community Leadership Forum (CLF) represents a unique project that sees the value of working with customary leaders in building peace, but also recognises that customary institutions need support (financial and logistic), modifications (for gender equity), and training and education on national laws and procedures to enable them to address issues essential for peace in their communities (e.g. land conflicts). The CLF project came from below (i.e. from *within* communities), it was started by customary leaders themselves who saw that it was time for them to stand up to address a conflict that outsiders had failed to resolve. Consequently, the project has succeeded by working with rather than against local and regional government and by enabling customary leaders to lead the way, with local and national organisations providing the necessary support.

Karambu Ringera discusses the role women play in peacebuilding in their families and community. In Kenya, women played an important role in the mediation process in 2008 as activists and advocates for peace. They waged conflict non-violently by pursuing democracy, human rights and justice for all. Working with the Red Cross, women also acted as peacekeepers and relief aid workers, thus contributing to reducing direct violence. Many also played the role of informal mediators, trauma-healing counsellors and policymakers, working in these ways to ‘transform relationships’ and address the root causes of violence. In the IDP camps many women were educators and participants in the development process, thus contributed to building the capacity of their communities and nation to prevent violent conflict. Women’s socialisation processes, the historical experience of unequal relations and values that women bring to the process of peacebuilding enable them to bring a unique lens to the negotiation table.

Affirming this important role of women to leverage peaceful existence, Gen. Memela-Motume, in her chapter on ‘Women’s involvement in peace and security: SANDF’ avers that women’s participation in all spheres of society must be recognised in line with good democratic practices, as it conveys a message of equality and non-discrimination. There is not such a great superfluity of men fit for high duties that society can afford to reject the services of any competent person.

In ‘Elections by contract: A covenant of peace in African communities’ Ajume Wingo examines attempts at perpetual peace in African states through electoral democracy as an instrument. He argues that the de facto democratic electoral system in many African states creates too many negative opportunities for pervasion and few positive opportunities for legitimacy. The solution is that of reorienting the electoral system so it can procure perpetual peace and legitimacy and act as a source of individual flourishing. The good news is that electoral democracy is the rule all over the continent and no longer an exception. The problem is one of perversion of the system. Ajume argues that African states are committed, at least regarding their formal institutions,

to democracy: indeed, there seems to be no African country today that does not, at least, claim to be democratic and no state that does not purport to showcase that claim through elections. However, few African states have earned a reputation as a thriving and legitimate democratic regime. The failure of democracy in Africa is manifest in many long-serving leaders who, once in office, consolidate power and manage to stay in office through sham elections in corrupt electoral systems.

Sylvester Maphosa, in his chapter on 'Elections and community regeneration: Implications for democracy and peacebuilding in the DRC', examines the link between elections, security and development. He argues that the predisposition to underscore no more than a set of electoralist, institutionalist, and proceduralist criteria in fragile and post-conflict countries as the embrace of human security is a fallacy in the quest for peaceful communities. Although some progress has been made in relation to democratisation, many gaps exist to be filled with regard to achieving enduring change and peace in the DRC. Elections alone do not make democracy and sustain a culture of peace and development. The emerging realisation is that rebuilding the DRC calls for multidimensional, multi-sectoral, multi-levelled and multi-staged process approaches to recovery that emphasise simultaneously complementing dimensions, such as reconciliation and psychosocial healing, to sustain long-term peace and cooperation between groups and eradicate the root causes of conflict.

Alphonse Keasley, in his chapter on 'Peacebuilding in South Africa: Cross-cultural implications', attempted to understand a process for developing peacemaking and peacebuilding with young individuals who hail from an individualistic and retributive justice cultural context. A fundamental outcome of this inquiry is that indeed humanising and rehumanising transformative practices can result from experiences when placed directly in another culture and context for a short period of time. In addition, the *ubuntu* value system is one that can be learned and ultimately internalised both cognitively and emotionally by those who are unfamiliar with its precepts. Given that, *Ubuntu*gogy throughout African education seems imperative. Granted, the transformative perspective calls for the involvement of young adults, but students living in a multi-generational African community would seem to have a greater chance of having the value system reinforced on a moment-to-moment basis.

Stephen King, in his chapter on 'Social media and civil society in the Tunisian revolution: Implications for democracy and peacebuilding', attests to the importance from a community-based peacebuilding perspective of understanding how social media can bring about change. This chapter examines the role that Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, TUNeZine and other social media played in the Tunisian revolution. King argues that civil society networking – in the Tunisian case transferred from the cyber public sphere to the traditional public sphere – played an important role in bringing about change. This chapter explains how social media helps to mobilise individuals, families and communities. It shows how cyber communities can make democratisation more accessible as a grassroots effort. Since peacebuilding relates to democratisation,

it is also important for those in the peacebuilding field to learn more about how the cyber public can alter conflict dynamics to leverage processes that can begin to build collective peace from within communities.

Collective policy recommendations

Each chapter includes a set of policy recommendations related to the peacemaking and peacebuilding endeavour that each author presents. These specific recommendations are useful for those who may be engaged at different levels of peacemaking and peacebuilding. Furthermore, these specific policy recommendations acknowledge different levels of discourse that actors may be conducting with their local leaders and legislative representatives. However, in examining the collective set of recommendations, consensus among the authors has emerged and may hold useful purpose for collective discussion and extended discourse. Not in any order of importance, the recommendations are:

1. Reconciliation needs to be accompanied by ‘development’ in order for it to be meaningful and for hard-won peace to last. Related to this, long-term investment in capacity-building and capacity development for peacebuilding is an asset.
2. *Ubuntu*-value education inspiring trust, shared values, norms, social cohesion, positive identity, and reciprocal support can make a monumental contribution to healing and integral development of a violently divided society. Accordingly, narrative theatre used as a pedagogical vehicle in violently divided contexts is effective in helping different groups appreciate the importance of their unity and shared humanity, which diminishes the urge for conflict.
3. Acknowledging our violent past and the roles we played as different actors under different circumstances is a major step toward reconciliation and building peaceful relationships. Indeed, all victims of violence have the potential to change. Thus, all restorative justice efforts have good relationships between individuals and groups (and their environment) as a central theme.
4. Creating an enabling space for inclusive peacebuilding and socio-economic processes is priceless to empower and mitigate marginalised community members, including women, children, former rebels, victims of violence, and the ‘other’ with different political opinions and assembly from the ruling regime of a particular time.
5. In the world of states, where life and death, freedom, justice and opportunities are not manna, but the products of political power, those who rule and are voted into public office must lead with responsibility and stewardship over their citizens. They have a duty to safeguard the human security of all citizenry and the larger international community.

6. Investing energies in the ‘electoralist, institutionalist and proceduralist’ theatres of elections that ignore some present causalities of conflict on ground level is not enough for positive social change; it should be accompanied by thoughtful and determined presence to confront the ‘root causes’ of conflict.

The goal is noble and the need is palpable. Peacemaking and peacebuilding are worthy of our unfettered individual and collective wills to remain vigilant about creating peace from within our beings and world society.

Building Peace from Within

An Examination of Community-Based Peacebuilding and Transitions in Africa

This book seeks to examine how successful models of building ‘peace from within’ in the African context function. It draws emerging lessons to provide critical recommendations on policy, practice and academia – our primary audience. While there are numerous examples of failures of conflict resolution in Africa, shown by intractable conflict axes, less attention is paid to successes. While acknowledging the challenges that exist, this edited volume provides positive examples of building peace from within in fragile contexts through many forms of initiatives and actions at different levels: community-based (through individual and/or collective local peace initiatives), government (through ministries and/or departments), and regional (through external and/or multilateral infrastructure for peace).

As a guiding principle the notion of building peace from within draws from the idea of community regeneration, which describes voluntary and peaceful activities of grassroots actors that reflect their broader interests of building peaceful communities and existence.

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